Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2013

http://archive.org/details/visabilityparen199598unse

VISUALLY
IMPAIRED
PRESCHOOL
SERVICES

To Elgin

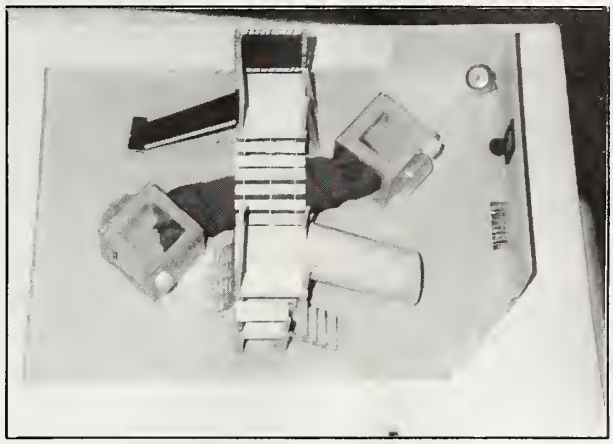
1229 GARVIN PL.
LOUISVILLE,
KY 40203
502.636.3207

S.J.S.
MAR 21 1995
RECEIVED

Vol. 11, No. 2 **Parents Newsletter** **Mar./Apr. 1995**

"Wonderland" Designs

Back in the Spring of 1994, the idea of a playground for VIPS kids was originated when the Metro United Way put Spalding University in touch with VIPS as a possible site for student volunteerism. Now, thanks to the creative and dedicated energies of a class of Spalding University art students, the playground at the VIPS-Louisville Office is beginning to take shape. The Public Art Class, taught by Robert Stagg and Joyce Ogden, broke up into two teams, each designing the ideal playground for children with visual impairments. And once the designs were unveiled, it was really difficult for VIPS staff to decide which to choose.



Soooooo ... the playground will feature the best of the design concepts from each! The theme of the playground will be oceanic, with an octopus fountain/splash pool, a giant sea turtle for climbing and sliding with a cave underneath, a textured "friendly dragon" with talking tube and covered sand-pit, a swing with chimes, benches ornamented with seahorses, and a scent garden. There will also be a round, fishnet hammock for rocking and bouncing, a metal drum and pegs to

continued on pg. 2

In This Issue:

SSI 2
VIPS Workshops 2
Tale of Two Children 3
You & I 7
Preparing for Preschool 8
VIPS Staff 8
News from Central & Eastern KY 9
New Children 9
Volunteers 10
Notes of Interest 10
Donors 11

hammer out musical sounds, and a life-sized "large abacus," with beads that are textured and tinkle. The back fence will feature oceanic cutouts that will provide tactual cues for little trailers. All pieces will be produced in bright, primary colors.

The group of students who brainstormed and modeled these wonderful ideas learned a lot about visually impaired children in their visits to the VIPS Office, and used this information to design a wonderland of texture and sound, taste and smell, and visual stimulation. Thanks to Bonnie Jones, Gloria Melo, Lynn Morgan, Gina Parr, Mary Schneider, and Greg Shown. A playground this creative and elaborate may take a while to construct. Several of the students are graduating seniors, but have pledged to stay involved through the process of building the pieces. And teachers have committed to seeing the project through completion.

The estimated cost of constructing the playground is at least $5,000. If you would like to lend your support to this wonderful project, please contact the VIPS Office!!

SSI: Falling Under the Balanced Budget Ax?

Since the 1990 Supreme Court decision which expanded the definition of disability for children, the number of disabled children receiving SSI benefits has tripled and is expected to cost almost $5 billion in 1995. The SSI Disabled Children's Program is now coming under scrutiny as a possible source of budget savings. The Republicans on the House Ways and Means Committee are looking at ways to curb program growth and reported abuses of the program. Fraud reports have centered on the inclusion of new mental impairment rules, with reports of parents instructing their children to "act crazy" so they could receive benefits or parents refusing treatments that would alleviate their children's conditions for fear of losing SSI payments. However, the General Accounting Office recently found that 70% of new beneficiaries have been so severely disabled that they would have qualified for benefits under old rules. One plan being considered is to abolish monthly cash payments to families of severely disabled children and replace them with specific services to help children live with their disabilities. This could severely impact families' abilities to provide the best care for their children.

Y'all Come!!

VIPS Plans Regional Workshops

VIPS will be offering regional workshops on "Adapting Interventions for Children with Visual Impairments," addressing the special needs of blind and visually impaired infants and toddlers. The workshops are made possible through the Outreach Grant that VIPS has received through the Kentucky Cabinet for Human Resources. VIPS staff from Louisville, Central Kentucky, and Eastern Kentucky will be conducting the workshops in South Central and Northern Kentucky this Spring.

The first workshop will be held on April 7 in Bowling Green at Western Kentucky University. Northern Kentucky University in Covington will be the site of the second workshop on April 27. During the workshops, participants will learn how to adapt the environment, teaching strategies, and materials to best meet the needs of visually impaired preschoolers. Workshops are open to all interested parents, professionals and any other persons involved with visually impaired young children. Watch your mail for registration information. Or call to obtain a registration form:

For Bowling Green Workshop
call VIPS-Central KY, (606) 254-5519
For Covington Workshop
call VIPS-Louisville, (502) 636-3207

Bowling for Dollars!!!

On Saturday, March 25 at 9 p.m. the VIPS Parents Board is sponsoring an Evening of No-Tap Bowling at Pro-Bowl I on Dixie Highway and Stephan Drive. Proceeds of this fund-raiser will benefit the children and families of VIPS. So let's fill the alleys!! Get your friends and family together and join other VIPS families for a great evening of fun for a good cause! There will be cash prizes for the top bowlers and lots of door prizes to raffle. Cost will be $12.50 per person for three games. If you would like to help with this event, call Pauletta at the VIPS Office!

A Tale of Two Children

by Pauletta Feldman, Family Services Coordinator and Mary Ann Reynolds, Early Interventionist

On the surface, Mary Ann and I may seem very different in that we have chosen what appear to be two diametrically opposed school placements for our blind children. But we are not very different at all in the hopes and dreams we have for our children — we have just chosen different paths to help our children achieve them, recognizing that the existence of placement options expands the current and potential opportunities our children have available to them. Mary Ann's daughter Ashley and my son Jamie have been at two opposite ends of a continuum of services that exists for the education of blind children. Ashley, who is eight and in third grade, has been in a fully inclusive, public school classroom since kindergarten. Jamie, who is ten and in fourth grade, has attended the Kentucky School for the Blind since kindergarten as a day student, and this year, is in a half-day placement at our neighborhood school.

Parents often ask Mary Ann and I about our children and their schools and why we've made the decisions we have.That's the purpose of this article — to share with all of you who are, or will be, struggling with the same decisions we have faced.

But as a prologue, we want to say that "nothing is written in stone." What works one year for your child, may not work the next. The important thing is that parents are aware of their options and know that we may choose from any of a variety of combinations to produce the best educational situations for our children. We need to know our children, their strengths and needs, and to know what's out there in order to make good decisions.

Our Dreams

Mary Ann

Our dreams for Ashley are the same as for our other two children — to grow up to be somebody special and unique, whether that be a homemaker, a teacher, a doctor, whatever. We both want her to be happy. Some people hope and dream for jobs, independence, etc. I guess I expect that to come. When Ashley was born, she had a severe heart defect. Two years and three surgeries later, worries of various abnormalities, fear of hearing problems and the diagnosis of "blindness" all but shattered our normal dreams. Therefore as sadness and abnormality creeped in we longed for happiness and normalcy. I guess I'm still developing those dreams as she grows. She wants to be a preschool teacher. If she dreams about being a teacher, that's what I dream for her. I want her to grow up, go to school, have friends, go to college, fall in love, marry and have her 2.5 kids. That's my dream.

Pauletta

It's sort of hard to describe all of the dreams I've had for Jamie — some of them have remained the same and some of them have changed over time (for instance, I don't think he'll turn out be be a classical violinist — he wants to be a rock star!). As a matter of fact Jamie has lots of careers in mind and wishes he could do them all at once — be a librarian like his Dad, write books, be a cook in a restaurant, a teacher, an actor, a disc jockey, and a musician. When he was five he wanted to be a fireman (I could see the headlines, "Blind Fireman Rescues Woman from Burning Building!") and a policeman. Mainly, I want a happy and productive life for Jamie. I would like for him to be employed and on his own someday. I'd like for him to be able to go to college. But most of all, I want him to believe in himself so that he will have the gumption to pursue his own dreams, whatever they may be.

Preschool Placements

Mary Ann

Ashley began attending preschool when she was four. Options were limited five years ago, more so than they are today. I looked for a preschool, playschool, anything that would allow her to be around other children. I looked for over a year, honest! I found TWO places available. People actually hung up on me when I mentioned "blind." People wouldn't return my calls. I was hurt. I loved my child and wanted others to love her, too. I wanted her to enjoy preschool and learn things that I could not provide in the home. VIPS provided intervention in the early years, and through Melinda,

we got hooked up with Tully Preschool. We were welcomed with open arms, the other children walked Ashley around to show her the room. After that, I knew that was the place.

Pauletta

Jamie started out at Christ the King Montessori Preschool two days a week when he was two and one-half years old. When he was three, we switched to Kenwood Montessori, which was closer to home and where my older children had attended. There were new teacher/directors at Kenwood who wanted to build the school. They learned about us through a consultant teacher at Christ the King and they came to recruit Jamie!! That was wonderfully refreshing, since I had felt that I had to "sell" him just to get anyone else to give him a try! I ended up working at his preschool as a teacher's aide, so I got to see first-hand the great things he was doing and learning. The school offered lots of hands-on, multisensory learning experiences. It was an environment in which Jamie was cherished.

Preparing to Make a Kindergarten Placement Decision

Mary Ann

Ashley's preschool years were great. Tully had an all day program and offered kindergarten in the afternoon. Because of that, she automatically remained another year. Time went by, Ashley learned the school building inside and out — she started cane training at four. Before using the cane, Ashley would run through the halls, never worrying about bumping into other children. I soon learned that Ashley, being half the other kids' size, needed her own independence so she could get on with learning. Because Tully is one level and Ashley was tiny, had heart disease, and was too brave for her own good, we decided after much thought that it was in her best interest to remain there, not to mention the educational benefits. Our neighborhood school where my older children attended had turned Ashley down for preschool. After that, I realized that it was up to me to find and give her the best possible option.

Pauletta

I talked to a lot of professionals. I talked to lots of blind people. I tried to find out everything I could about all the special adaptations a blind child would need to succeed in life. I tried to come to grips with what were Jamie's greatest areas of need and what particular strengths he had. I believed that learning the skills of blindness would be a key to his future success. And then I visited schools to compare program strengths with Jamie's needs. Jamie could have stayed for kindergarten at Kenwood Montessori, where there was a very strong mutual attachment. But I wanted to know what else was out there. I visited public school programs, one where there was a resource teacher and resource room for visually impaired children. I visited the kindergarten at the Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB)*, and knew immediately, in my gut, that this was where Jamie needed to be. *(To enroll, vision must be a child's primary disability, and the child must possess communication and basic self-help skills.)

Why We Chose the Schools We Did

Mary Ann

Because our neighborhood school would not take Ashley during her early training years, it really was not in her best interest to move her two years later. At Tully, she knew her way around and could move where she needed to go independently, to art, music, PE, lunch, etc. Now she could concentrate on academics and not just learning a new building. I taught elementary school and knew how important those early learning years were. I felt that it was going to be hard enough — let's not make it any more difficult than it has to be. I thank God it worked out. She is at Tully to this day and will remain until she graduates from the fifth grade.

Pauletta

There were many reasons we chose KSB. Jamie is almost totally blind, with just a little light perception. I was very concerned that he develop good braille skills. Jamie was also physically delayed and had poor upper body strength and fine motor skills — at KSB, he could participate in adapted PE daily and the kindergarten program focused on fine motor development and pre-braille skills. While Jamie was in preschool, his social skills had not progressed as I had hoped. He was a very

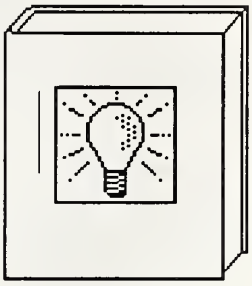
passive child. I was afraid that he would not do well in a large class — not come out of himself and not stand up for himself — so the smaller class sizes at KSB were attractive to me. I also thought it was important to his developing self-image for him to have blind friends and role models. He has been at KSB for almost six years now. However, we have begun easing him into our neighborhood school. That has been a wonderful process which could be the subject of a whole different story!!

What Their Placements Have Been Like

Mary Ann

Ashley is a popular girl and has many friends. Because many of the children live in the community, she is able to meet with them on the ballfield, in the grocery, etc. Many activities in our community help others to see Ashley leading a normal life and the kids know she is part of their world, too, not just in school. This creates friendships. Ashley has always had the help of a vision itinerant. In the early years, she would braille stories in Grade I braille (alphabet letters with no contractions) because the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) only produced early reading materials in Grade II braille (with contractions). Even her preschool teachers helped her with braille and she had braille labels for just about everything, even the fish! Ashley has kept many of her friends from preschool, often recognizing their voices in the hall. When she was younger, she enjoyed stopping and talking to all the teachers. She learned so much about those around her. Because many of the children already knew Ashley, they did not over-help her, but knew when to help, and they still do this. Ashley is learning how to request help and hopefully how to give it back.

Her teachers have been wonderful. Her primary teachers' classes have been right next door to each other. She has had the same locker for three years. How's that for consistency! Finally, I can drop her off at the side door, like everyone else; she walks to her locker, puts her things up, and goes about her business. Do you know how many years that has taken? Four! Who says they don't have a lot to learn? People at Tully are warm and caring and know her. There is always a friendly welcome when she enters the door every morning. Ashley has had to miss some things occasionally to fit her "special" classes in. One year she fussed at me every morning because she had to miss PE to have her cane lesson. Her sister even informed me that PE was her favorite class. I told Ashley I remembered when I taught and all the kids said their favorite classes were PE and lunch, and at least she didn't have to miss lunch! We soon learned that for every loss there was usually a gain. Her vision itinerant has been wonderful. I am so thankful for her patient endurance and sense of humor. She has communicated to us over the years and helped Ashley learn so much. She has provided extra tutoring, daily balancing of hours for Ashley in resource and classroom, and even helped Ashley get a computer system from the J'town Lions Club. She has been a real source of support for me. Her specialized training in vision and experience with integrating other blind children has given us confidence and hope.



Pauletta

Jamie started cane training in preschool and was able to continue with his same O&M instructor at KSB. Since kindergarten, he has received regular O&M instruction, from three times each week individually to group classes with his other classmates to work on residential travel and quiet street crossings. There has been a lot of class changing at KSB, so lots of opportunities for Jamie to practice travel! He must travel to different buildings to participate in music and PE and to go to lunch. Each year, his O&M instructor has worked with him on his schedule and routes. Through third grade, Jamie had adapted PE and instrumental music daily. Daily living skills have been built into the curriculum. Jamie worked on the "Patterns" series for learning to read and write braille from APH, a systematic and sequential process of introducing the 178 braille contractions. Jamie was introduced to the slate, abacus and computer in first grade, however, it is only this year that he has finally become proficient in their use. He is using the computer more and more for writing, learning the basics of word processing, and getting introduced to computer bulletin boards. He has gotten to be in three full-costume, musical productions — last year he was Gepetto in the primary grades' production of "Pinnochio!" Seeing the kids act on stage was such a gift — it was something I had never imagined blind

children would be so good at doing!! KSB has been a real support system for me. Jamie's teachers have always been accessible and welcomed my input. They have been almost another extended family!

Jamie spent a second year in third grade last year to hone some skills and do some maturing, and it seemed a good time to explore new possibilities. We were feeling that his skills were now strong enough to move into a more integrated educational placement. Last year after Christmas, he started attending our neighborhood school, Semple Elementary, one day each week. Our primary objective for this little experiment was social — we wanted Jamie to begin to adapt to a different learning environment and to make more friends in our neighborhood. There was mutual visitation between schools and a truly wonderful collaboration between the Jefferson County Vision Program, KSB and Semple administrators and teachers to make sure Jamie had what he needed. I think this easing-in process really paid off for both us and Semple, giving all of us the support and time we needed to work into a comfortable relationship. This year, Jamie is going half-day, each day to both schools. I couldn't be more proud or appreciative of my little neighborhood school, which has taken my little interloper and made him one of their own! Plans are for him to do the same for fifth grade. He has a long day, getting on the bus at 6:30 a.m. to KSB, where school starts at 7:30 a.m., for language arts and math, then back on the bus at 11:30 a.m. to Semple, where he has lunch and spends the afternoon for science and social studies until 3:20 p.m. He has music, PE, and computer at both schools. His JCPS vision itinerant has been wonderful and works with him three to four afternoons each week. His O&M instructor from KSB has worked with him on learning his way around Semple and is now working on walking between school and home.

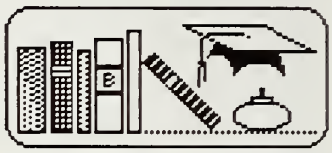
Have There Been Disadvantages?

Mary Ann

I've talked about the advantages. The disadvantages are that Ashley has little opportunity to meet and get to know other blind children. We sent her to KSB summer school and she enjoyed that experience and enjoys meeting VIPS children. I am sure she has many questions she would ask another blind child when given the opportunity. We all need someone who understands. Ashley is attracted to many of the children and people in our church who have special needs and enjoys getting to know them.

Pauletta

There are always tradeoffs. The main disadvantage of Jamie's placement has been that he hasn't gotten to know many children in the neighborhood and hasn't had to deal with typical classroom situations where there are many students and distractions. But I think we are working on these with the dual-placement.



Filling In the Gaps

Mary Ann

Because some things may need extra attention or explanation, we all try very hard to provide as much information as possible to help Ashley understand and experience things in life. Instead of talking about the park, we go. We make cookies a lot and talk about measurements. When they are talking about specific subjects in school, we try to find opportunities to increase her understanding. We provide as many "real" experiences as possible. She has a "preschool" in the basement with real cubbies and activities and she, her sister, and their friends learn a lot in "their classroom." I try to buy tapes and allow more music than usual and know that it is important to her. It is scary living on a busy street and having a daughter who is too brave for her own good. But hopefully, she will grow up and learn to be wise in her independence. She wants to be like everyone else. I used to think that nothing would stop her and she could do anything anybody else does. I guess I still do with a few exceptions: "Don't cross the street unless I'm with you", "Don't go out front", "Please do your homework by yourself", "Hooray! You poured your own milk", "You brushed your own hair and matched your clothes!"

Pauletta

Will we ever be able to fill in the gaps??? There just don't seem to be enough hours in the day! I couldn't ask for more from the education that Jamie is receiving in school!! He's getting all the academics plus working on many vision-specific skills. Jamie has to master writ-

ing in three forms (braille writer, slate, and keyboard). He needs to work on handwriting so he can sign his name. But there are still so many gaps in his knowledge and skills. We spend three times the amount of time another sighted child would spend on science and social studies, talking while we read, creating impromptu models, to build on his concepts. Homework can take a lot of time each day, especially now that he's in fourth grade. With KIRIS testing coming up, he will be staying for extended school day to practice open response tests and performance events. He needs down time, time for friends, time to learn to do things for himself. We fit in everything we can — but we also try to keep in mind that he's a kid who needs time to be just a kid. And we need time to be just a family!

Happy Now?

Mary Ann

Maybe we all just appreciate the little things more and that makes us all smile a lot. Yes, we are very happy.

Pauletta

Jamie's a great kid, he has fantastic educational services, we have wonderfully supportive teachers. How could we ask for more?!!

The only ones who can really determine what will be best for your child is you and your child with the help of supportive professionals. There are creative solutions to problems! There are combinations of services that can be developed to meet your child's unique needs!

The best advice we can offer about pursuing service options for your child and making them work is this: Don't be afraid to dream. Don't be afraid to look at many possible paths to the same end. Be creative. Be flexible. Be willing to compromise. Know which battles are worth fighting, and save your energy for those. Try to solve problems at the school level without alienating your support base — fragile relationships can become strong ones when they are given time to grow. Your child's teachers can be your strongest allies.

You & I

by Elaine Popovich*

I am a resident./ You reside.
I am admitted./ You move in.
I am aggressive./ You are assertive.
I have a behavior problem./ You are rude.
I am noncompliant./ You don't like being told what to do.
When I ask you out for dinner, it's an outing./ When you ask someone out, it's a date.
I don't know how many people have read the progress notes people write about me. I don't even know what is in there./ You didn't speak to your best friend for a month after she read your journal.
I made mistakes during my check writing program. Someday I might bet a bank account./ You forgot to record some withdrawals from your account. The bank called to remind you.
I celebrated my birthday yesterday with five other residents and two staff members. I hope my family sent a card./ Your family threw you a surprise party. Your brother couldn't make it from out of state. It sounded wonderful.
My case manager sends a report every month to my guardian. It says everything I did wrong and some things I did right./ You are still mad at your sister for calling your mom after you got that speeding ticket.
I am on a special diet because I am five pounds over my ideal body weight./ Your doctor gave up telling you to lose.
I am learning household skills./ You hate housework.
I am learning leisure skills./ Your shirt says "couch potato."
After I do my budget tonight, I might get to go to McDonald's — if I have enough money./ You were glad the new French restaurant took your charge card.
My case manager, psychologist, R.N., occupational therapist, physical therapist, nutritionist and house staff set goals for me for the next year./ You haven't decided what you want out of life.
Someday I will be discharged ... maybe./ You will move onward and upward.

**From "Stop Staring! Start Sharing," edited by DaleDieleman, Grand Rapids: Youth Unlimited, 1992)*

Attitudes present greater barriers to opportunity than disability itself.

Getting Ready for Your Child to Enter Preschool

On Thursday, Feb. 17, the PAL class featured guest speakers Angie Rueff and Jane Ann Bradford of the Jefferson County Early Childhood Program and VIPS parent Tami Arbogast who talked to parents about preschool services for children with disabilities. Angie and Jane Ann discussed the process of a child becoming enrolled in preschool, including referral, meeting with parents to obtain permission to evaluate their child's needs, assessment, eligibility, the types of preschool services children can receive, the IEP (Individual Education Plan), and placement.

Tami described her experiences going through the transition process and what her daughter Jordan's preschool placement has been like. Tami gave parents some valuable advice. She said that she had been intimidated by the assessment process at first, but that it had turned out to be comfortable and non-threatening for she and Jordan. She urged parents to be honest with themselves and assessment staff so that the results would be as valid as possible and provide a sound basis for determining the services their child needs.

Tami had worried about Jordan starting school at three — it seemed so early to have to let go. But, now Tami is thankful that Jordan is in school where her development has progressed and she has had the opportunity to be part of a group of children. She has visited Jordan's school and seen how Jordan is involved in all classroom activities. Finally, Tami stressed how powerful parents could be in the transition process, something she did not realize at first. She encouraged parents to fully participate in the trasition process, to share their expertise about their child, and to help formulate the goals and objectives of the IEP.

Meet the VIPS Staff*

Lisa Leister, Comptroller

Lisa is in her fifth year with VIPS, although she has just recently rejoined the VIPS staff after working for a year on another job. Lisa said that coming back to VIPS was like "coming home." Lisa was VIPS' first bookkeeper and is now Comptroller for the VIPS system after completing her Associate Degree in Accounting. Currently, she is working on her B.S. Degree in Accounting at Sullivan College. Lisa, her husband Tommy, 11-year-old daughter Amanda , and eight-year-old son Andrew, who has a hearing impairment, live in Louisville. Lisa enjoys bowling, fishing, and reading in her spare time.

Lucille Smith, Receptionist

Lucille originally come to VIPS through the Senior Community Service Employment Program. Previously she worked as a Child Protection Social Worker with the Jefferson County Dept. for Human Services. Lucille's first job out of college in 1952 was as a teacher with the "Colored Students' Program" at the Kentucky School for the Blind. Lucille shares her free time as Church Musician at West Broadway United Methodist. She shares her home with nine cats (all of which are available for adoption!!).

(* A continuing series introducing the VIPS Staff.)

NEWS FROM:

VIPS-Eastern Kentucky
Box 1119
Martin, KY 41649
(606) 285-9409
Staff: Joyce Williams

VIPS-Central Kentucky
343 Waller Avenue, Suite 303
Lexington, KY 40504
(606) 254-5519
Staff: Terry Goldfarb, Ray Coates,
& Rebecca Johnson

It is with great sadness that VIPS announces that Eastern KY interventionist Luann Winters has left the staff. Luann has accepted a position with Indianapolis Teen Challenge. Working with teenagers is something Luann has always wanted to do. In her new position, Luann will be a house parent for teen girls who have substance abuse problems or have been sexually abused. We wish Luann much luck and fulfillment in her new position.

As a parting gift, Luann arranged for VIPS-Eastern KY families to meet with Tom Lykins of Louisa, who is blind. Mr. Lykins is a Louisa City Councilman and a retired police dispatcher. He welcomed VIPS parents and children into his home to talk about his life and demonstrate some of the latest assistive technology for the blind. He also demonstrated braille reading and writing and gave parents some hands-on instruction in using the braille writer and slate and stylus. It was a wonderful evening!

Ray Coates of VIPS-Central KY is now working part-time while he pursues his Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology at Asbury Theological Seminary. A search has begun for another part-time interventionist for the Central-KY Office.

The support group for VIPS-Central KY parents has been meeting regularly each month at the Hunter Presbyterian Church in Lexington. Toni Reese, an Expressive Therapist and parent of a child with special needs herself, has been facilitating the meetings. Childcare for the meetings is provided by wonderful volunteers from the Lexington Junior League. Watch your mail for news of an April meeting!!

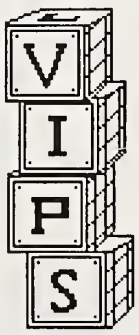
Welcome New Kids

VIPS is pleased to welcome the following new children and their families into the Program:

VIPS-Louisville
Ashley — 9 months old
Sarah — 17 months old
Shy-Lisha — 4 months old
(New Albany, IN)
Christopher — 11 months old
Andrew — 2 years old

VIPS-Central KY
Kasara — 2 years old
(Albany, KY)
Daniel — 22 months old
(Albany, KY)
Bobbi — 2 years old
(Willisburg, KY)

VIPS-Eastern KY
Terrance — 16 months old
(Louisa, KY)
Amanda — 12 months old
(Prestonsburg, KY)



Some Special Help From Special People

Thanks to our volunteers for their wonderful gifts of time!!

For helping with PAL classes on Thursday mornings, thanks to *Linda Brewer* who is the grandmother of former VIPS child Connor Gullett.

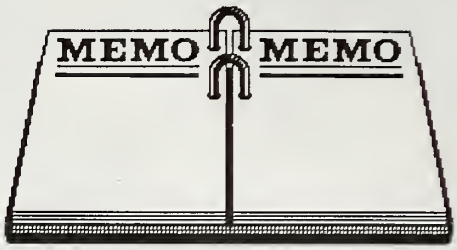
For providing childcare for parents meetings, thanks to *Angela Holmes, Britney Johnson,* and our next-door neighboor *Jo Mattingly.*

For her fantastic job putting the VIPS Strategic Plan into printed form, thanks to *Peggy Heck,* mother of VIPS board member Wendy Heck.

For providing childcare for the VIPS-Central KY Support Group, thanks to Lexington Junior League volunteers *Melissa Buckner, Karen Hollins, Marie Houlihan, Laura Pace, and Kathleen Toron.*

For the exciting playground design, thanks to Spalding University art teachers *Bob Stagg and Joyce Ogden,* and their wonderfully creative students *Bonnie Jones, Gloria Melo, Lynn Morgan, Gina Parr, Mary Schneider, and Greg Shown.*

Notes of Interest



- **VIPS has recently acquired two new videos of interest to VIPS families. "An Introduction to the Ketogenic Diet - A Treatment for Pediatric Epilepsy,"** by the Charlie Foundation, and **"Functional Vision: Learning to Look,"** produced in collaboration between the North and South Dakota Departments of Education.

- **"Hurdles" is a new monthly publication** for parents of exceptional children in Kentucky. A special introductory subscription rate of $15 per year is being offered. To subscribe, send a check to: Amy Waggener, Editor, Hurdles, P.O. Box 906, Columbia, KY 42728, (502) 593-4893. Hurdles also welcomes parent contributions of inspirational stories or information of benefit to other parents. For a free introductory issue, call the VIPS Office, (502) 636-3207.

- **"Resources the Disabled Can Use to Acquire and Fund Computers," is a free report** available from Twin Peaks Press. To obtain your complimentary copy, send your name, address, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Free Computer Report, Twin Peaks Press, P.O. Box 129, Vancouver, WA 98666.

The VIPS Parents Newsletter is a bi-monthly publication of Visually Impaired Preschool Services, 1229 Garvin Place, Louisville, KY 40203, (502) 636-3207. Please direct comments or suggestions to Sharon Bensinger, Executive Director or Pauletta Feldman, Newsletter Editor. Subscription cost is $15 per year.

Thanks To Our Donors

Thanks to all of the wonderful individuals and organizations that contributed so generously over the past few months. Please call VIPS to inform us of any omissions or corrections!

Ms. Cynthia Bayes
Dr. & Mrs. Gerald Berman
Mr. & Mrs. Burris Bragg
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Brand
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Covitt
Mr. & Mrs. A. W. Erlen
Mr. & Mrs. Will Evans
Mrs. Karolyn Feltenstein
Dr. Peggy Fishman
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Frazier, Jr.
Ms. Marilyn Fuhrman
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Hammer
Mr. & Mrs. Albert Horton
Dr. & Mrs. John Howard
Ms. Thelma Isaacs
Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Mayse
Mr. & Mrs. Nick McArthur
Mr. & Mrs. Terry McWilliams
Ms. Merrily Orsini
Dr. & Mrs. L. G. Owen
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Robards
Ms. Katherine Robinson
Mr. Adam Ruschival
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Sallee
Dr. & Mrs. Charles Sarasohn
Mrs. Ruth Sobel
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Stevens

Christian Appalachian Project
Louisville Downtown Lions Club
Metro United Way
WHAS Crusade for Children

VIPS has some special funding needs right now. Perhaps you could help!!!

Playground -- This is a very exciting project, but could be quite expensive project -- we need at least $5,000! With your help, VIPS could have a playground specifically disigned for young children with visual impairments (see article on front page)!!

Family Retreat Weekend -- VIPS is preparing to hold our Seventh Annual Family Retreat, July 15-16. This extraordinary program provides growth experiences for the whole family! The projected cost of the Retreat is $7,000. Families only pay $35 to attend, which includes lodging, all meals, educational conference, and camp for children.

Honor Thy Mother and Thy Father

For the "parents who have everything" how about honoring them with a donation to VIPS in honor of Mother's Day, Father's Day, birthday, anniversary, or other special reason. This gift, superior to a box of candy or one more neck-tie, enlarges your family to include all VIPS families. What could be a more meaningful gift than investing in the future of our children? VIPS will send a card to the honoree acknowledging your gift and a thank you to you!!

YES!! I would like to be a Friend of VIPS!!!

Enclosed is my donation of $10 ___ $15 ___ $25 ___ $50 ___ $100 ___ Other ___

This gift is sent:
For general operating expenses ___ VIPS-Louisville ___ VIPS-Central KY ___ VIPS-Eastern KY
For a special project _____
In memory of: _____
In honor of: _____
Name _____
Address _____
_____

Please detach and return to:
Visually Impaired Preschool Services
1229 Garvin Place, Louisville, KY 40203

Upcoming Events

Thursdays

PAL (Play and Learning) Classes will be held at the VIPS-Louisville Office for VIPS children birth through two years of age. Watch your mail for new of Spring field trips. There will be NO class on THURSDAY, MARCH 30.

Saturday, March 25

The VIPS Parents Board will sponsor a No-Tap Bowling Tournament, starting at 9 p.m., at Pro-Bowl I on Dixie Highway. All proceeds will benefit VIPS! Come out and have some fun for a good cause with us!!!

Wednesday, March 29 - Sunday, April 2

VIPS will host the fourth training session for Project Prism to be attended by early interventionists from seven agencies from throughout the US that serve visually impaired preschoolers Project Prism is a longitudinal research study of factors affecting the development of young visually impaired children. As part of the training, VIPS children will be brought into the office to assist trainees with learning assessment tools and techniques.

Thursday, April 6

A Supper Support Group will be held at the VIPS-Louisville Office, 6:30 p.m., with supper provided by members of the VIPS Parents Board. Following dinner, parents will have the chance to sit and talk about issues of concern. Childcare will be provided. Call the office, 636-3207, to let us know you are coming so we are sure to have enough food and babysitters!

Friday, April 7

VIPS will sponsor a workshop on "Adapting Interventions for Children with Visual Impairments," addressing the special needs of blind and visually impaired infants and toddlers, in Bowling Green at Western Kentucky University. For registration information, call VIPS-Central KY at (606) 254-5519.

Friday, April 28

VIPS will sponsor a workshop on "Adapting Interventions for Children with Visual Impairments," addressing the special needs of blind and visually impaired infants and toddlers, in Covington at Northern Kentucky University. For registration information, call VIPS-Louisville at (502) 636-3207.

We're trying on a new look... let us know how you like it!

Visually Impaired Preschool Services
1229 Garvin Place
Louisville, KY 40203

Address Correction Requested

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 284
Louisville, KY

VIPS

Metro United Way

It brings out the best in all of us.

SUSAN SPUNGIN, ED.D.
ASSOC. DIR. FOR PROGRAM SERV.
AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND
11 PENN PLAZA SUITE 300
NEW YORK, NY 10001-2018

VISUALLY IMPAIRED PRESCHOOL SERVICES

VIPS

1229 GARVIN PL.
LOUISVILLE,
KY 40203
502.636.3207

Vol. 13, No. 5 | Parents Newsletter | Sept./Oct. 1997

Enriching Experiences

During the weeks of July 15 through 24, a Summer Enrichment Program was held at VIPS-Louisville for VIPS children, ages three to five years old, who had already attended preschool or were preparing to enter preschool this fall. A total of 13 children attended the two-week program, coordinated by VIPS staff Mary Ann Reynolds and Jane Bartley. This program was made possible through a grant from the Younger Women's Club. Transportation was provided through contract with the American Red Cross. Our bus driver, George McDaniels, was just great with the children!

The program featured field trips to the Louisville Science Center and Huber's Farm, and themes for each day, such as Pajama Day, Birthdays, Friends Day, and Nature Day. Children made print/braille books, worked on computers, and participated in arts & crafts, movement and mobility games, and group activities. VIPS children attending the program included: *Ashley Alvey, Della Brooks, Michael and Sammy Caporale, Bruce Childress, Dustin Figg, Peter Foster, Paul Granda, Connor Gullett, Steven Miller, Christopher Stelly, Morgan Thomas and Bobby Townsend.*

The program was supported by the work of a number of adult volunteers, including *Becky Lyles,* of the Younger Women's Club, *Tricia Hintz,* a U of L practicum student, and *Lisa Macpherson,* a Vision Itinerant with the Jefferson County Public Schools. In addition, the children of several VIPS staff and their friends helped out, including: *Mary Catherine Atkins, Jessica Bartley, Sarah Kriete, Jeannie and Jill Logsdon, Scott Moore, Amy Ramsey, Adriene and Ashley Reynolds, Jennifer Stelly, and Jamie Weedman.*

Continued on pg. 2

In This Issue:

VIPS Cookbook Now Available 3
Exceptional Parent Fundraiser 3
VIPS Kids Get PEP 4
Outreach Update 4
When Good Intentions Go Bad 5
My Little Girl 7
Heaven's Very Special Child 7
KY Center for Arts Audio Description Schedule 8
Welcome New Kids & Congratulations Graduates 9
Visual Impairments In Infants & Young Children 10
VIPS Staff News 12
Thanks To Our Donors 13
News from the VIPS Board 14
Upcoming *en*TECH Workshops 15
In Memoriam 15
Special Gifts Of Time From Special People 16
Notes Of Interest 16
Dot-To-Dot, Pt. IV 17

Dustin Figg steps from the bus on his first morning at VIPS Summer Enrichment.

Paul Granda (left) and Connor Cullett (right) enjoy their time with volunteer Mary Catherine Atkins (center).

Bruce Childress gets some computer tips from volunteer Jessica Bartley.

Dustin Figg (left), Michael Caporale (center), and Peter Foster (right) share tasks while making ice cream.

One of the young Summer Enrichment volunteers wrote the following letter of thanks for the opportunity to help out with VIPS Summer Enrichment.

Dear Mrs. Reynolds,

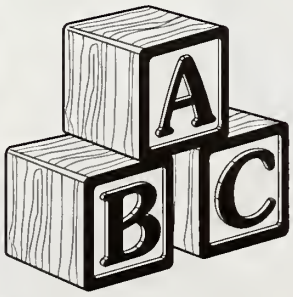
I was just writing to say thanks for letting me go on the field trip with you. Even though it was just one field trip, it made one big impression in my heart and mind. The way it has, is by helping me notice that when people make fun of people with disabilities so people will laugh, it's not funny.

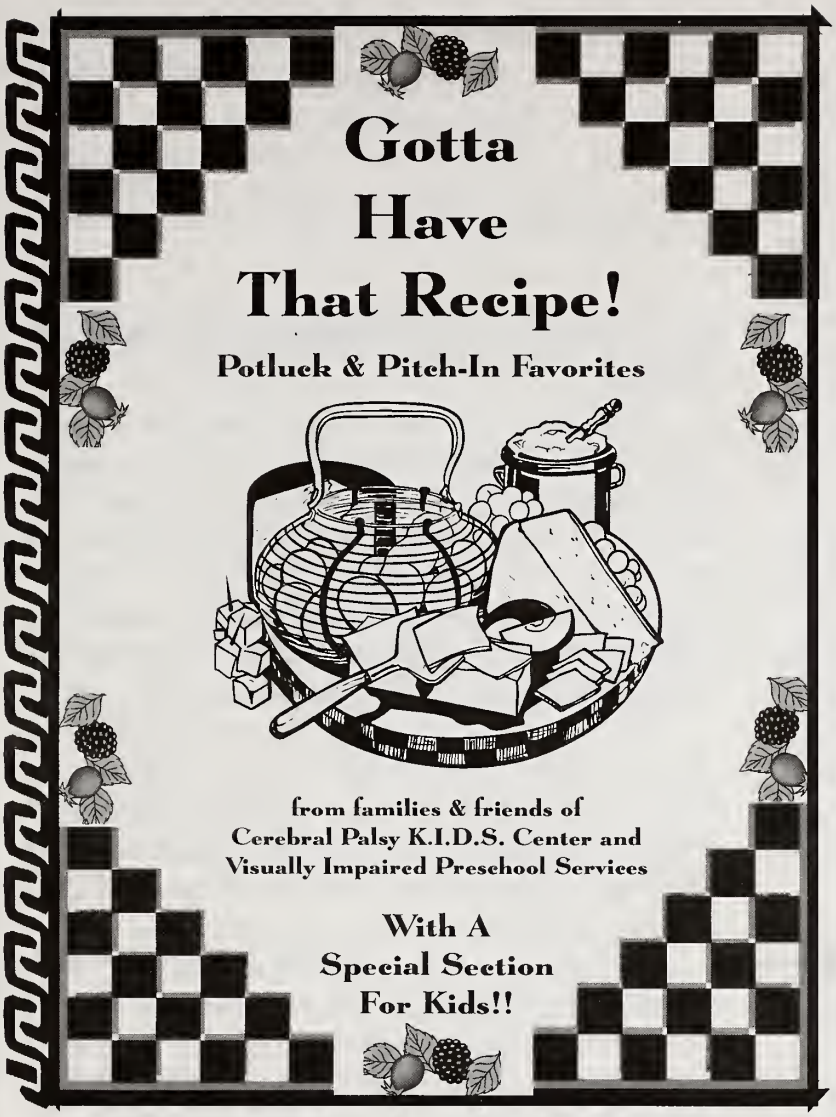
I'm guilty of it, but I have been trying not to be. I have realized it wasn't funny before, but going on one field trip made it clearer to me. This is helping me become a better Christian.

I wrote about impressions before. Well I hope this will make an impression in your heart and all the other people who work there. What you are doing is so great. I can tell it has made an impression on me and is making one on those kids.

If you would like to share this letter with other people, please feel free. I am proud of it. Thank you for opening my eyes.

Love always,
Jill Logsdon





NOW AVAILABLE!! You've Gotta Have The VIPS Cookbook!!

Cookbooks contain nearly 500 tried and true recipe favorites of families, friends, and staff of VIPS and the Cerebral Palsy K.I.D.S. Center. You're sure to want *one for your kitchen.* And the VIPS Cookbook will make a *great gift for family and friends!* So start your Holiday shopping now!

Special features include:

• A special section of kids' snacks & crafts •
• A collection of helpful hints and information •
• A contributors and general index •

All proceeds benefit VIPS and the Cerebral Palsy K.I.D.S. Center

You may purchase your cookbooks at either VIPS Office:

VIPS-Louisville
1229 Garvin Place
636-3207

VIPS-Central KY (in Lexington)
343 Waller Ave., Suite 303
254-5519

$7.50 for each cookbook

Mail orders must be prepaid.
Add shipping & handling:

$2.50 for 1-2 books
3.50 for 3-4 books
5.25 for 5-6 books
7.00 for 7-8 books
8.50 for 9-10 books

Send mail orders to:
VIPS Cookbook
1229 Garvin Place
Louisville, KY 40203
636-3207 or toll free 1-888-636-8477

Exceptional Parent Fundraiser

VIPS has formed a fundraising alliance with Exceptional Parent Magazine, an award-winning national publication that focuses on issues facing parents of children with disabilities and special health care needs. It offers straightforward and practical advice, emotional support, and useful information on mobility, sports and recreation, teens, health, education, and technology.

For every one-year subscription to Exceptional Parent Magazine purchased by a VIPS parent at the cost of $32, Exceptional Parent will donate $8 back to VIPS! VIPS will receive $10 for each two-year subscription, and $12 for each three-year subscription.

For a complimentary issue of Exceptional Parent and/or a subscription slip, contact Adrienne Clark, Family Services Coordinator for VIPS-Central KY at (606) 254-5519 or toll free at 1-888-254-8477.

VIPS Kids Get PEP!!

Each Friday morning this school year, VIPS-Louisville children who are in preschool will be able to participate in a Preschool Enrichment Program (PEP). PEP is designed to focus on children's vision-specific needs. The program will provide hands-on experiences, movement and music activities, assistive technology, fine motor development and pre-braille skills, orientation and mobility skills, and social development. PEP is being coordinated by *Early Interventionist Mary Ann Reynolds*, who is being assisted by *VIPS Parent Joy Stelly. Dorothy Nolen,* music teacher at the Kentucky School for the Blind, is conducting music and movement activities for the class on a volunteer basis. VIPS is contracting with the American Red Cross for bus transportation for participants. Fortunately, driver *George McDaniels,* who drove for Summer Enrichment, is able to continue his work with VIPS children in PEP. *Marcia Reynolds* is serving as bus monitor, as well as a classroom aide.

Parent involvement is also a goal of the program. Parents will attend the last Friday of each month and participate in learning activities with their children, as well as educational activities designed to meet parents' information needs. **Grants from Kosair Charities and the WHAS Crusade for Children** is making the PEP program possible. PEP is open to the first 12 children who register; eight children have enrolled so far.

Outreach Updates

VIPS Outreach Changes

As of October 1, 1977, Suze Staugas of VIPS-Louisville took over VIPS Outreach Services for Eastern Kentucky, with the exception of the Lake Cumberland Point of Entry, which Monica Busha, of VIPS-Central KY, will continue to serve. Adrienne Clark, of VIPS-Central KY, will continue to provide parent support for Eastern Kentucky Outreach Families. All new referrals for VIPS Outreach should be mailed to the VIPS-Louisville Office. Each Point of Entry throughout the state has received referral packets for this purpose. If you need more referral packets or are sending a referral, contact:: Suze Staugas, Outreach Consultant, Visually Impaired Preschool Services, 1229 Garvin Place, Louisville, KY 40203, toll free 1-888-636-8477.

KSB Announces Reorganization of Outreach Services

The Kentucky School for the Blind, in an effort ot reach greater numbers of students with visual impairments throughout the state, has made some significant changes in Outreach Services. Outreach Services has been divided into two branches: the Kentucky Instructional Materials Resource Center (KIMRC), headed up by Barbara Bunuan, and the Kentucky Instructional and Diagnostic Services (KIDS), headed up by Linda Smith.

The KIMRC will maintain eye reports, handle requests for large print and braille books and educational aids, offer braille production, and maintain the Parent Resource Center. Braille production services are being offered on a limited scale for the time being, but capacity will be increasing.

The KIDS branch will handle requests for assistance from local school districts, including consultation, assessment, in-service training, technical assistance, participation in ARC and IEP meetings, Quality Programs for the Visually Impaired (QPVI) Training , and general information and assistance. In addition, the KIDS branch will maintain the PREVIEW program, which addresses early childhood service needs.

As part of service expansion, KSB will hire two regional consultants. In addition, a directory of certified Orientation and Mobility Instructors available for contracting throughout the state has been published. Also, daylong braille refresher workshops for vision teachers will be offered throughout the state. (Workshops for the Eastern part of the state were held prior to this newsletter's publication.) Upcoming workshops include: Oct. 22 at KSB; Oct. 29, Jefferson County; Nov. 5, Bowling Green; and Nov. 24 during the Annual Kentucky Department of Education Conference in Louisville.

For more information or to request services, contact: KIMRC — Barbara Bunuan or KIDS — Linda Smith, Kentucky School for the Blind, 1867 Frankfort Ave., Louisville, KY 40206, (502) 897-1583

When Good Intentions Go Bad

VIPS Parent Connie Coin shares the following article from a "Miss Manners" column, published in the Sunday edition of The Courier-Journal this past summer, along with her response to Miss Manners' advice. Connie says, "I think we should encourage as many people as possible to drop her a note — even a short one. Just the sheer numbers of people who respond can be more effective than what is said."

Dear Miss Manners: My 5-year-old has a habit of vocalizing his curiosity about people's abnormalities in public. What is an appropriate response?

Gentle Reader: "Darling! You have no idea what you're saying, and you don't know how it sounds!" Then when he looks bewildered, because he did have an idea of what he was saying, drag him away. Then you must teach, once again, that neither honesty nor curiosity justifies voicing thoughts hurtful to others. (Miss Manners trusts you have been working on this for five years already.)

July 16, 1997

Miss Manners
c/o The Courier-Journal
P.O. Box 740031
Louisville, KY 40201-7431

Dear Miss Manners,

I read your column in our Sunday paper regularly, and I am impressed with most of the advice you offer. Despite your title, which sounds like someone who would be absorbed with stuffy, trivial points of etiquette, most of your advice is down-to-earth and very practical. Your guiding principle seems to be that good manners means being aware of other's feelings and treating everyone with consideration and dignity.

With that in mind, I was shocked to read the horrible advice you gave to a reader who wrote to ask how she should handle her five-year-old son when he expressed curiosity towards a handicapped person. To borrow your words, "Darling! You have no idea what you are saying, and you don't know how it sounds!" I was horrified to read in a nationally syndicated advice column that parents should drag their children away from such situations after admonishing them soundly for having the audacity to try to make conversation with a person whose "abnormalities" would make him different.

When we were children, people like my son were institutionalized and kept far out of sight of polite society. That is why people of our generation feel so uncomfortable around people with disabiiities. However, young children have not yet been taught this fear and discomfort.

Try to put yourself in the shoes of the person with the "abnormality." As an example, let's use my son, who has severe cerebral palsy. He is wheelchair bound, cannot hold his head up, drools excessively, and is nonverbal. He also cannot swallow well enough to survive on oral feedings, so he must be fed through a feeding tube that was surgically inserted directly into his stomach. Needless to say, he generates quite a bit of curiosity from the children we meet. Unfortunately, most of these children have parents who adhere to your advice of scolding their children for speaking to us (or sometimes even looking at us). Any poor child who dares to try to start a conversation with us is yanked away as if he had wandered too close to a dead animal.

Cerebral palsy is NOT a contagious disease, and neither are most of the other abnormalities that children are so curious about. Why would you encourage people to treat them like lepers in the name of good manners? It breaks my heart every time I take my son out in public and see the great lengths people go through to avoid any contact with him. He is a beautiful young man, strong willed, with a mischievous disposition and typical three-year-old sense of humor. Why do you advise people to avoid him like the plague? Don't you think treating him this way is hurtful?

One of my favorite TV shows growing up was The Twilight Zone. One episode was about a "Big Brother" type society that punished its criminals by placing a mark on their foreheads and labeling them "invisible." No one was allowed to speak to, look at, or in any acknowledge the presence of an "invisible" person. Those who broke this law would also be labeled "invisible." It was an agonizing punishment.

The story followed a man who was convicted of a crime. When he was sentenced, he laughed at the punishment. He would be free to wander the streets, restaurants, and places of entertainment freely because no one would be allowed to stop him from doing as he pleased. He skipped happily through the first few days. But as time wore on, the society carried out this punishment so effectively that he had to look at himself in the mirror to assure himself that he still existed. At the end of the story, the man is screaming in the middle of the street begging someone, anyone, just to notice him.

Connie Coin and son, Beau, last Halloween.

Behind every abnormality is a person who has all the same interests, desires, and hurts as a "normal" person. Why don't you give children a chance to get to know these people? When we were children, people like my son were institutionalized and kept far out of sight of polite society. That is why people of our generation feel so uncomfortable around people with disabilities. However, young children have not yet been taught this fear and discomfort. They have no qualms about speaking to my son and learning about his condition. Frankly, these children should be commended for their actions, not dragged away as if they had committed some horrible crime.

Obviously there are some people who do not want to be bothered, and their wishes should be respected. When you are stuck waiting in a long line, it is not rude to make small talk with the people around you unless the person you are trying to engage in conversation indicates (verbally or with body language) that they do not wish to be bothered. Why should a disabled or disfigured person be treated differently? If the person in question does not mind explaining their condition (and you would be surprised at how many of them would be more than happy to), why in the world would you advise punishing children for making polite conversation? (And yes, a disability is as polite a topic of conversation as the weather.)

I realize that you simply had no idea what you were saying, nor how awful it sounded to those who are "abnormal." If you think a child's frank curiosity is hurtful, try to imagine what your life would be like if you were that man screaming in the middle of the street and begging for any kind of attention. I hope that you will consider printing an alternate response in your column in the near future. It would be a shame to see people behaving in such a hurtful manner, thinking that they were simply being polite. There is nothing polite about making handicapped people invisible.

Sign me,

Connie Coin
Mother of an
"abnormal" child,
Proud of it and glad to
answer any questions

My Little Girl*

by Bill Bowen, Stanton, KY

The joy of a new child in the family is great — new life in the beginnings of its path — with night feedings, changing, the sleep time countdown — everything that goes with a newborn — and still three kids going to school. That's a 24-hour job.

Is there going to be love? Yes, the love for Alexa was there when the doctor first told us about the new one on the way. Holding her and feeling her little warm body felt so good; watching her move about in her bed — I could watch for hours. Feeding time was nice, watching my wife with Alexa. Alexa, without saying, loves to eat. Giving her everything was a must, but so was remembering that there were still three boys there, still playing, homework, trips, or anything that was needed. Ellen and I worked hard to provide and make sure everything was done for the kids that had to be done.

Knowing that everything was not perfect, we tried hard not to gauge Alexa to the three boys — they are all different. One walks early, one is talking at 10 months, and one throwing everything that his little hands could pick up. Even though Alexa had a problem with her sight, it still didn't take away the fact that she was a little girl in need of love, caring, help, and some tickles. She was going to get everything that was needed and then some. She is different than anything God had ever made or will ever make.

We have watched her from the beginning till now, and she is growing so fast — her hair, her legs, and her eyes. She is able to do things that at first we didn't think she would be able to do, but she is doing them. She is quickly going by goals set by our interventionists, Monica and Kim. (Thank you very much!) Two weeks ago they set some goals, one being walking four steps along a chair. Yesterday, Kim was here working with Alexa, and she was walking to get a ball!

With the new life that is with us, Alexa Rae, each tear that comes from my eyes has its own story — Happiness, Joy, and Sadness. But each one is filled with an endless supply of love for my little girl, Alexa Rae Bowen.

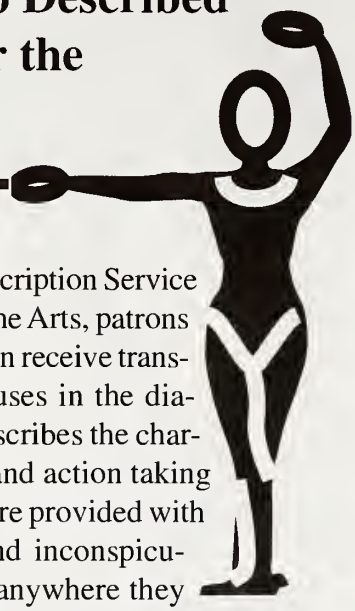
**Reprinted from the VIPS-Central Kentucky Update, April, 1997.*

*Heaven's Very Special Child**

A meeting was held quite far from earth,
"It's time for another birth,"
Said the Angels to the Lord above.
"This special child will need much love,"
It's progress may seem very slow,
Accomplishments it may not show,
And it'll require extra care
From the folks it meets way down there.
So let's be careful where it's sent;
We want it's life to be content;
Please Lord, find parents and teachers who
Will do a special job for you.
They will not realize right away
The leading role they are asked to play,
But with this child sent from above,
Comes stronger faith and richer love.
And soon they'll know the privilege given
In caring for this gift from Heaven;
Their precious charge, so meek and mild,
Is Heaven's Very Special Child.

**Thanks to VIPS-Louisville mom Kathy Watrobski for sharing this poem.*

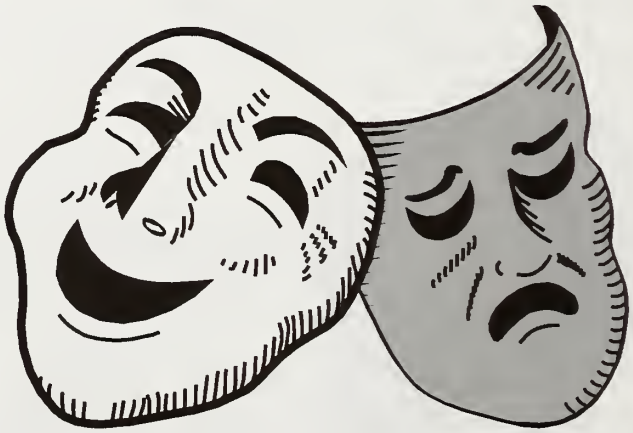
Kentucky Center for the Arts Announces Audio Described Performances for the 1997-98 Season



Through the Audio Description Service at the Kentucky Center for the Arts, patrons who are visually impaired can receive transmitted narration during pauses in the dialog of performances that describes the characters, costumes, settings, and action taking place. Users of the service are provided with a very small transmitter and inconspicuous earphone, and may sit anywhere they choose in participating theaters. Narration is provided through the dedication of a group of highly-trained volunteers. The 1997-98 season promises many exciting performances, including:

"Beakman's World," Stage One, Oct. 25, 4 p.m.
"La Traviata," Kentucky Opera, Oct. 26, 2 p.m.
"Scholastic's The Magic Schoolbus — Live!," Stage One, Nov. 1, 5 p.m.
"Frankenstein," Stage One, Nov. 2, 1 p.m.
"Wilder Rediscovered," Actor's Theatre, Nov. 9, 2:30 p.m.
"Pinocchio," Stage One, Nov. 16, 3:30 p.m.
"Chicago," Broadway Series, Nov. 29, 2 p.m.
"Jack and the Beanstalk," Stage One, Nov. 30, 3:30 p.m.
"A Christmas Carol," Actor's Theatre, Dec. 7, 2:30 p.m.
"The Best Christmas Pageant Ever," Stage One, Dec. 13, 2 p.m.
"The Nutcracker," The Louisville Ballet, Dec. 20, 1:30 p.m.
"State Fair," Broadway Series, Jan. 3, 2 p.m.
"Private Lives," Actor's Theatre, Jan. 11, 2:30 p.m.
"The King and I," Broadway Series, Jan. 24, 2 p.m.
"Dinosaur," Stage One, Jan. 31, 2 p.m.
"Ali," Actor's Theatre, Feb. 8, 2:30 p.m.
"Shakespeare Love Fest," Louisville Ballet, Feb. 14, 2 p.m.
"From Beginning to End: Friends, Fables and Fun," Stage One, Feb. 15, 3:30 p.m.
"The Magic Flute," Kentucky Opera, Feb. 15, 2 p.m.
"Tap Dogs," Broadway Series, Feb. 21, 2 p.m.
"Tosca," Kentucky Opera, Mar. 8, 2 p.m.
"Humana Festival of New Plays," Actor's Theatre, Mar. 15, 2:30 p.m.
"The Miracle Worker," Stage One, Mar. 27, 7 p.m.
"Big," Broadway Series, Apr. 4, 2 p.m.
"Radio Gals," Actor's Theatre, Apr. 19, 2:30 p.m.
"Alice in Wonderland," Louisville Ballet, Apr. 25, 2 p.m.
"Beauty and the Beast," Stage One, May 3, 3:30 p.m.
"The Great Gilly Hopkins," Stage One, May 9, 2:00 p.m.
"Othello," Actor's Theatre, May 17, 2:30 p.m.
"Rent," Broadway Series, July 18, 2 p.m.

The Center makes a brochure of Audio Described Performances available on tape. Receivers should be reserved at the same time tickets are ordered since there is a limited number of devices. Call the Center's Accessibility Hotline at (502) 562-0111 for more information. Audio Description Services are made possible through the generous support of Mrs. Terry Sales in memory of her late husband Stuart.



Welcome New Children ....

VIPS is pleased to welcome the following new children and their families into the VIPS Program:

VIPS-Louisville

Alex — 8 months old
Crestwood, KY
Heather — 2 years old
Louisville, KY
Jessica — 3 years old
Louisville, KY
Joseph — 2 years old
Bardstown, KY
Makalyn — 14 months old
Hanover, IN
Sara — 6 months old
LaGrange, KY
Seth — 2 years old
Bardstown, KY

VIPS-Central Kentucky

Brandon — 12 months old
Frankfort, KY
Cramer — 2 years old
Lexington, KY
Ethan — 3 months old
Manchester, KY
Ethan — 2 years old
Mayslick, KY
Hannah — 10 months old
Firebrick, Ky
Jada — 11 months old
Lexington, KY
Kayla — 13 months old
Lexington, KY
Rachel — 9 months old
Lexington, KY

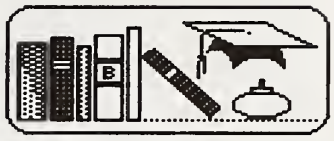
New Outreach Children
Eastern Kentucky

Chandice — 13 months old
Lee County

Western Kentucky

Alex— 2 years old
McCracken County
Andrew — 2 years old
Grayson County
Edward — 13 months old
Grayson County
Katherine -- 14 months old
Union County
Kaylin -- 10 months old
Ohio County
Lauren — 5 months old
Simpson County
Matthew -- 2 years old
Crittenden County
Megan -- 2 years old
Henderson County
Sydney — 7 months old
Allen County

.... And Congratulations Graduates!!



Best of luck to the following VIPS-Louisville families and their children who have graduated from the VIPS Program and entered their local district schools.

Lachelle Armstrong — Hawthorne Elementary
Neshelle Armstrong — Hawthorne Elementary
Della Brooks — Gutermuth Elementary
Marrissa Chambers — Hawthorne Elementary
Jonathan Cord — Stonestreet Elementary
Michelle Edwards — Hardin County Schools
Dustin Figg — Millcreek Elementary
Peter Foster — Home School
Donshaun Gilbert — Hawthorne Elementary
Paul Granda — Bowen Elementary
Lanie Jordan — Zachary Taylor Elementary
Dillon Lohr — Madison IN Schools
Patrick Noyes — Our Lady of Perpetual Help (IN)
Nathan Oliver -- Jefferson County Schools
Chelsey Ritchey — Chenoweth Elementary
Phillip Shaw — Cochran Elementary
Christian Sullivan — Goldsmith Elementary
Travis Taylor — Tully Elementary
Jasmine Washington — Kenwood Elementary

Best wishes to the following VIPS-Central Kentucky families and their children who have entered their local school systems:

Molly French
Ashley Layne
Taylor Layne
Maggie Rose
Eric Sparks
Morgan Stewart
Heather Watts
Baker Whitney

We'll miss you all. Please stay in touch!!

Visual Impairments in Infants and Young Children

by Julie Broyles, Early Interventionist

This paper explores the most common of eye problems found in young children. The sense of sight has the greatest impact on learning for young children. By the age of six months, infants can learn the concepts of object permanence and cause and effect by watching repeatedly people and objects coming and going in their environment. They begin to anticipate the effects of their actions on the environment and other people, and will repeat those actions that produce the effects they desire. These actions are directed at satisfying their own bodily needs, rather than objects surrounding them. Between the ages of four and nine months, children begin to notice objects in the surrounding, external world. Severe visual impairment or blindness in young children can affect visual tracking, response to persons or objects, exploration of the visual world, discovery of hands and feet, imitation of movement, and generalization about the world that surrounds them.

Our eye is much like a camera. It focuses on an image with a lens that allows light to enter. These images are transferred to the brain, which processes the information. On the surface of the eye is a clear, curved window called the cornea — it protects and refracts light. The iris is the shutter to the eye. Its main job is to control the amount of light entering the pupil. The adjustable opening is the pupil, and the lens is behind this opening. The size of the pupil controls the amount of light that reaches the retina. The retina sends this image to the brain for interpretation, much like the film in a camera.

Visual processing in the brain depends on how clearly focused these images are. During the first four months that an infant is learning to see, the brain will detect if an image is less clear in one eye and suppress that image. If the brain is deprived and visual information is suppressed, a permanent reduction in visual acuity can result in amblyopia. This is the most common cause of vision loss in children. Amblyopia can be treated successfully if diagnosed by age four. If detected between the ages of four and nine years, treatment is still successful, but less likely to restore vision fully. Amblyopia can occur very quickly in young children and infants.

There are four main causes of amblyopia. The most common is strabismus, or crossed-eyes. This occurs when the eyes are not perfectly aligned. The brain uses the straight eye for fixation and suppresses the weaker eye. Anisometropia is the difference in refractive (focusing) error between the two eyes. For instance, if a child is nearsighted in one eye and farsighted in the other, the brain will suppress the weaker image. In both strabismic and anisometropic amblyopia, if the underlying problem is not corrected, the loss of vision in the weaker eye will result. Amblyopia also results from visual deprivation due to a dense cataract or severe droop in the eyelid. Another cause is prolonged patching of the preferred, "good eye" in treating strabismus.

Strabismus is the turning in or out of an eye that can be seen at about two to four months of age. An ophthalmologist should be consulted if the turning is persistent in one or both eyes. The deviation of an eye can lead to amblyopia because the brain suppresses the image from one eye. The most common forms of strabismus are esotropia (inward turning) and exotropia (outward turning). These make up 75% of all cases of strabismus. Hypertonia (upward turning) and hypotonia (downward turning) are less common. The main causes of strabismus are congenital or infantile esotropia. In sensory strabismus, the eye deviates because of

impaired vision, either from a tumor or weakened extraocular muscles. Many children with cerebral palsy (CP) have associated muscle imbalance affecting their eye alignment. These muscle imbalances can be corrected with surgery.

Refractive errors happen when there are defects in the cornea and lens. Myopia (nearsightedness) occurs when refractive powers are too strong or the eyeball is too long. Light rays focus in front of the retina causing blurry images of distant objects. Hyperopia (farsightedness) occurs when the eyeball is too short, or light rays focus behind the retina, causing blurry near images. The third major refractive error is astigmatism. Astigmatism results from defects in the smooth curvature of the cornea, creating blurry images. Corrective lenses with the appropriate curvature, convex spherical (hyperopia) or concave spherical (myopia), are prescribed to correct astigmatism. The strength of the light-bending of the lenses is measured in units called diopters. An ophthalmologist may use a "+" for convex (hyperopia) or a "-" for concave (myopia) in their report. The higher the diopter, the greater the error and the stronger the corrective lens needs to be. The more power prescribed, the greater the need for the child to wear corrective lenses.

Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) was the greatest cause of blindness in young children during the 1940's and 1950's. Since that time, the incidence of ROP has declined. However, with advances in medical technology of the past two decades, the survival rates of premature babies has resulted in an increase in ROP. The causes are not completely understood, but injury to the tiny blood vessels growing along the retina seem to be affected by high or fluctuating levels of oxygen in the blood of premature infants. Even with constant monitoring of oxygen levels, it is difficult to prevent the development of ROP. It is believed the onset of ROP coincides with the infant's postconception age and not the degree of prematurity. Severe ROP with a high risk of retinal detachment can be detected at 32-34 weeks after conception. ROP often peaks at 39 weeks regardless of birth age or weight. The best method to prevent ROP is to find strategies to prevent premature births.

Treatments for ROP include reattachment of the retina prior to full detachment; very little can be done once the retina detaches. The outcomes for reattachment are discouraging, and despite surgery, other eye disorders may become apparent in the infant. Of children with ROP, approximately 70% have other disabilities, including mental retardation, CP, speech-language impairments, and behavioral/emotional disorders.

The most misunderstood visual impairment in young children is Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI). This form of visual impairment is due to a defective brain pathway, rather than to abnormalities of the eye itself. Many children with CVI have primary disorders, such as CP, mental retardation, or hearing impairment. Almost any injury to an immature brain before or after delivery can lead to traumatic brain injury. The brain neurons relaying visual impulses or processing visual impulses are affected. Conditions most associated with CVI are hydrocephalus, congenital brain malformations, traumatic brain injury (including shaken baby syndrome), complications of meningitis or encephalitis, and perinatal hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy (i.e., brain damage in the neonatal period associated with oxygen deprivation and/or insufficient blood supply to parts of the brain). Very often, children with CVI have a combination of ocular and cortical visual impairments, as do some ROP children. Children with CVI may show no visual function. However, there is a good chance visual functioning will improve over time. The cause is purely cortical, with visual processing pathways disrupted. By definition, children with CVI have normal eye examination.

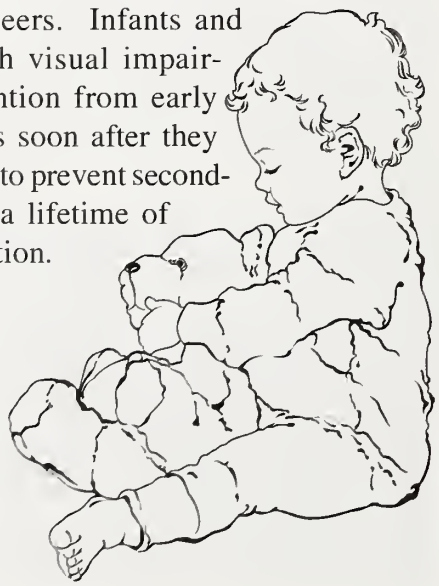
Three other visual impairments found in young children are optic nerve hypoplasia (ONH), cataracts, and infantile glaucoma. ONH is a developmental abnormality present at birth, in which the optic nerve is smaller than normal and has less than normal axons. The cause is often undetermined, but can be associated with exposure to alcohol or maternal substance abuse. ONH is often associated with strabismus and searching nystagmus (rapid back-and-forth movements of the eye) that is evident by three months. Other associated impairments may be present, including congenital brain abnormalities, such as absent septum pellucidum, agenesis of the corpus callosum, cerebral atrophy, cystic lesions, and hormonal dysfunction, because the optic nerve is very close to the hypothalamus and pituitary gland. Children with ONH may have slow growth patterns related with a syndrome of septo-optic dysplasia.

Once a specific hormone deficiency is identified, hormone replacement therapy may improve growth, but there is no treatment to improve visual function, except preventing amblyopia.

Cataracts are the opacification of the lens within the eye. There are several types of cataracts. Cataracts block the visual image from the retina. This can lead to amblyopia. Causes of cataracts are genetic in 23% of cases. Other causes include exposure to intrauterine infections (rubella), lack of intrauterine oxygen, chromosome disorders (Down Syndrome), or inborn metabolism errors (galactosemia), as well as a number of other syndromes of unknown cause. Most cataracts require surgical removal to prevent vision loss due to amblyopia. Unilateral congenital cataracts that are in the visual field are generally removed before a child is four months old.

Infantile glaucoma occurs in one out of 10,000 births. It is caused by a faulty drainage system in the anterior chamber of the eye, between the cornea and the iris. The result is high pressure from a constantly producing aqueous. The pressure build-up pushing on the retina results in a damaged optic nerve. Surgery to improve the drainage of the aqueous from the eye is the definitive therapy. Glaucoma can occur as a secondary medical condition, but 50% of infantile glaucoma is genetic.

Approximately 70% of children with severe visual impairments have additional disabilities. Their progress is delayed and milestones reached at later stages than their sighted peers. Infants and young children with visual impairments need intervention from early childhood specialists soon after they have been diagnosed to prevent secondary disabilities and a lifetime of educational intervention.



VIPS STAFF NEWS: Goodbye Jane and Jan; Hello Julie!

In August, VIPS-Louisville bid a fond farewell to *Jane Bartley*, who has taken a Vision Itinerant position with the Floyd County and Harrison County schools in Indiana. Jane is a pioneer for these school systems, neither of which has ever had a vision program. She will be serving some of the Southern Indiana children she worked with through VIPS, who have since entered their district schools. *Jan Bowles,* Secretary for VIPS-Central Kentucky, has also resigned.

Julie Broyles with daughter, Sara.

VIPS has been fortunate to add *Julie Broyles* to the Louisville staff. Julie will be working as an Early Interventionist. She is a great addition to the staff, having just completed her VI certification through U of L and being the parent of a former VIPS child, 12-year-old Sara, who has multiple disabilities and is attending Westport Middle School. Currently, Julie is working on her masters degree in Early Childhood Special Education. In addition to daughter Sara, Julie has a 13-year-old daughter, Michelle, two grown step-children, and one grandchild. Julie's career goal is to provide families of children with disabilities with the resources they need to educate themselves and to advocate for their children.

Thanks To Our Donors

Thanks to the following individuals and organizations that have so generously supported VIPS through their contributions over the past couple of months. These donations reflect those received from May 20 through September 26, 1997. Please call VIPS with any omissions or corrections. (Donations in honor or memory of individuals are listed separately under an individual's name if at least five donations are received.) All donations for the 1997 VIPS Corporate Cup Golf Tournament will be listed in the next issue of the VIPS Parents Newsletter.

Donations — General

Mr. George Albrecht
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Bensinger
Mr. & Mrs. David Brewer
Mr. James Carpenter
Mrs. Karen Cord (Toys)
Dr. & Mrs. Craig Douglas
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Frazier
Mrs. Bernadine Harrison
Ms. Rita Hynes
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Lyles
Mr. & Mrs. Lee R. Meyer
Mr. & Mrs. George Morsman
Mrs. Mary F. Oppenheimer
Mrs. Goldye Opper
Mr. & Mrs. Francois Perrin
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Prizant
Ms. Bobbie J. Raibert
Dr. & Mrs. Philip Rosenbloom
Mrs. Ed Shapira
Ms. Ellen B. Shelby
Mr. & Mrs. James Stierle
Mr. & Mrs. Louis T. Young
American Legion, Highland Post (PAL/Parent Support)
Barth Foundation (Computer System)
Elks Grand Lodge
Don Fightmaster Golf Tournament (1998 Family Retreat)
Garvin Gate Association
Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels (Phone System)
Metro United Way
Springer & Lee Optical
St. Matthews Lions Club
WHAS Crusade for Children
Women Helping Others (Assistive Technology)
Younger Woman's Club (Summer Enrichment)

Donations to VIPS-Central Kentucky

Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Amlung
Ms. Lynn Johnson
Kentucky Utilities Co.
Mr. & Mrs. Scott Stevens
Mr. & Mrs. Winston Wood

1997 Family Retreat Weekend

Caleb Bell Memorial Fund
Clark's Otter Creek Park Restaurant
KSB Alumni Association
KSB Charitable Foundation
Louisville Downtown Lions Club
Middletown Lions Club
North Oldham Lions Club
The Temple Sisterhood
The Woman's Club of Louisville
VIPS Parents Board

In Memory of Charles Bensinger, Sr.

Mr. & Mrs. Leslie Aberson
Mr. & Mrs. Saul Ades
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Altman
Ms. Melinda Atkins
Bank One of Kentucky NA
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Bayersdorfer
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Beatty
Mr. & Mrs. William Catlett
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Chandler
Mr. Lewis Cole
Mr. Roger Coleman
Community Coordinated Child Care
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Denman
Mrs. Charles Drautman
Mr. John O. Ellis
Mr. & Mrs. Norman Epstein
Mr. Will D. Evans
Ms. Pauletta Feldman
Mr. Robert Felsenthal
Mrs. Karolyn Feltenstein
Mr. & Mrs. Sidney Figa
Mrs. Nancy Opper Fleck
Mrs. Betty Fleischaker
Mrs. Maud Fliegelman
Mrs. Jeanne B. Frank
Mr. & Mrs. Murray J. Greenwald
Ms. Marjorie Grumbacher
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Helm
Mrs. Ilma Hirsch
Mrs. Jo Hirsch
Mrs. Patricia H. Hirsch
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Hirsch
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Huffman
Mr. & Mrs. Norman Iler
Jefferson Manor
Ms. Dorothy C. Joseph
Mr. & Mrs. Philip Klaus
Ms. Audrey L. Klein
Mr. & Mrs. Maynard Koplan
Mr. & Mrs. Dave Lawrence
Mr. & Mrs. Phillip Levy
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Levy
Mr. & Mrs. Stuart Levy
Mrs. Selma B. Levy
Mrs. Adele G. Linker
Mrs. Joan G. Lynch
Ms. Elizabeth Marx
Mrs. Mildred Meyers
Mr. & Mrs. Ben Morgan
Mr. John J. Morton
Mr. & Mrs. Cooper Moseley
Mr. & Mrs. John Oppenheimer
Mrs. Goldye Opper
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Prizant
Mr. & Mrs. I. A. Rosenbaum, Jr.
Mrs. Theresa A. Rosenbaum
Mr. & Mrs. Mason C. Rudd
Dr. & Mrs. Ted Schramm
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Schramm
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Schulman
Mr. & Mrs. Max Shapira
She, Incorporated
Mrs. Arnold Simons
Mrs. Ruth Sobel
Mrs. Helen Solomon
Mrs. Jennie Staugas
Ms. Dorothy Steiner
Mrs. Ann F. Sternberg
Mrs. Robert J. Watson
Mr. & Mrs. Martin Weinberg
Mrs. Edna K. Yarmuth
Mr. & Mrs. Lou Young

In Honor of the wedding of Dr. & Mrs. Steve Lichtenstein

Ms. Holly Barnhill
Ms. Kathleen Baumann
Mr. Jerry L. Beck
Ms. Linda Brown
Mr. Shayne Calesnick
Mr. & Mrs. David Goetz
Ms. Stella Gordon
Mr. James A. Metry
Mr. David L. Patterson
Mr. & Mrs. John Pieper
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Reynolds
Ms. Marcy Rosengarten
Ms. Helene Siegel
The Stern Family

In Honor of Mrs. Robert Watson's Birthday

Mrs. Irma Bensinger
Mrs. Betty Fleischaker
Mrs. Maud Fliegelman
Mrs. Jeanne B. Frank
Mrs. Ilma Hirsch
Mrs. Jo Hirsch

News from the VIPS Board of Directors

In June, the Board of Directors of VIPS held their Annual Meeting. During this meeting, Officers were elected and new members were welcomed to the Board. Board Officers include: **President — Bill Carroll,** CPA & Partner, Strothman & Company; **Vice President — Gale Pearce,** Vice President & General Counsel, Acordia of Louisville; **Secretary — Clinton Glasscock,** Vice President, Old Colony Insurance Service, Inc.; and **Treasurer — Kristie Saffer,** CPA & Supervisor, Strothman & Company.

New Board members include: *Sharon Davis,* Executive Director of Exceptional Child Education, JCPS; *Scott Duncan,* Stock Broker, Smith Barney, Inc. (Lexington); *Patrick Hughes*, former VIPS parent and Computer Programer, U of L; *Maria Jones*, Parent Representative; *Ellen Prizant,* President, Louisville Section of the National Council of Jewish Women; *Lester Sanders,* President, Chase Sanders & Associates; *Dr. Tuck Tinsley,* President, American Printing House for the Blind; and *Elizabeth Woodward,* CPA, KPMG Peat Marwick (Lexington). *Dr. Peggy Fishman,* Pediatric Ophthalmologist, joins the Advisory Board. Many thanks to board members whose terms have expired, including *JoLynn Agan, Joan Balot, Maud Fliegelman, Amy Magruder, Stewart Prather, Ben Ruiz, Susan Jinnett-Sack, and Tom Van Etten.*

The VIPS-Central Kentucky Advisory Board has been busy looking into fund raising and relocation issues. **President Scott Duncan** and **Vice President Elizabeth Woodward** are also serving actively on the VIPS Board of Directors.

Thanks to all for your dedication to VIPS children and families!

VIPS Board of Directors 1997-98

OFFICERS:

William G. Carroll, *President*
CPA & Partner, Strothman & Company

Gale Pearce, *Vice-President*
Vice President & General Counsel, Acordia of Louisville

Clinton Glasscock, *Secretary*
Vice President, Old Colony Insurance Service, Inc.

Kristie Saffer, CPA, *Treasurer*
CPA & Supervisor, Strothman & Company

DIRECTORS:

Linda Brewer, Parent Representative
Lewis Cole, Community Representative
Sharon Davis, Jefferson County Public Schools
Craig Douglas, M.D., Pediatric Ophthalmologist
Scott Duncan, Smith Barney, Inc.
Norman Gill, Bohn-Gill Design
Wendy Heck, Louisville Gas &n Electric Co.
Joseph B. Helm, Jr., KY Real Estate Commission
Patrick Hughes, Parent Representative
Maria Jones, Parent Representative
Jennifer Lonergan, UPS
Robert Micou, St. Francis School
Jan Moseley, Jefferson County Public Schools
Ellen Prizant, Community Representative
Margaret Redmon,Honey Locust Valley Farms
Lester Sanders, Chase Sanders & Associates
Willie Settel, Social Service Representative
Bernard Tichenor, Community Representative
Tuck Tinsley, American Printing House for the Blind
Lisa Verderber, M.D., Pediatric Ophthalmologist
Elizabeth Woodward, KPMG Peat Marwick
Bonnie Thorson Young, Seven Counties Services

ADVISORY BOARD:

Charles Barr, M.D., Pediatric Ophthalmologist
Thomas Briggs, Retired, KFC
Peggy Fishman, M.D., Pediatric Ophthalmologist
Julie Lee, M.D., Ophthalmologist
Steve Lichtenstein, M.D., Pediatric Ophthalmologist
Charles Mahl, M.D., Ophthalmologist
Stewart Prather, Middleton & Reutlinger

*en*TECH Workshops

The following Fall 1997 workshops on assistive technology are scheduled at enTECH:

- **"What's New in Augmentative/Alternative Communication,"** Thursday, Oct. 23, 5:45 p.m. $20.00.
- **"Now That I Have This Communication Device ... What Do I Program Into It?,"** Thursday, Nov. 6, 5:45 p.m., $20.00.
- **"Dynavox 2 Seminars,"** Nov. 13 and Dec. 11, 9 a.m., free.
- **"Windows 95 For The Novice,"** Tuesday, Dec. 2, 6 p.m., $20.00.
- **"Resource Lab,"** Mondays, 5:30 p.m.
- **"Monthly Family Computer Labs,"** Oct. 25, Nov. 15, and Dec. 13, 9:30 a.m.

For more information or to register for classes, call (502) 574-1637.

IN MEMORIAM

This issue of the *VIPS Parents Newsletter* is dedicated to the memory of

Madison Tubbs

daughter of Anetra Tubbs of Lexington, KY who passed away at the age of eight months in July, 1997.

Our hearts go out to everyone who loved Madison.

The *VIPS Parents Newsletter* is a bimonthly publication of Visually Impaired Preschool Services, Inc. Please direct comments or suggestions to Sharon Bensinger, Executive Director or Pauletta Feldman, Newsletter Editor. *Subscription cost is $15 per year outside of Kentucky.*

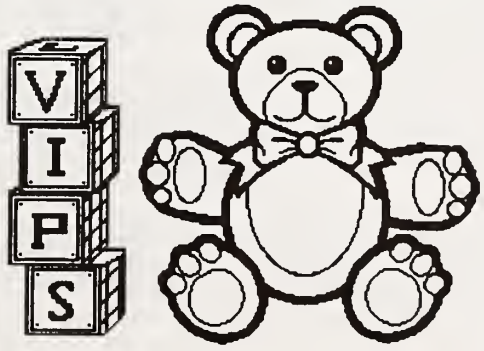
Visually Impaired Preschool Services
Sharon Bensinger, Executive Director

VIPS-Louisville
1229 Garvin Place
Louisville, KY 40203
(502) 636-3207 Toll free 1-888-636-8477

Melinda Atkins, Education Coordinator
Beverly Ballard, Office Assistant
Alisa Beatty, Office Manager
Julie Broyles, Early Interventionist
Pauletta Feldman, Family Services Coordinator
Robin Frazier, Public Relations
Judy Goldring, Early Interventionist
Lisa Leister, Comptroller
Mary Ann Reynolds, Early Interventionist
Suze Staugas, Early Interventionist/Outreach Consultant

VIPS-Central Kentucky
343 Waller Avenue, Suite 303
Lexington, KY 40504
(606) 254-5519 Toll free 1-888-254-8477

Monica Busha, Early Interventionist
Adrienne Clark, Family Services Coordinator
Karen Johnston, Early Interventionist



Special Gifts of Time From Special People

For help with Thursday morning PAL during the summer, thanks to *Mary Catherine Atkins, Robin Bensinger, and Adriane and Ashley Reynolds.*

For assistance during the VIPS-Louisville Summer Enrichment Program, thanks to *Becky Lyles,* of the Younger Women's Club; *Tricia Hintz,* a U of L practicum student; and *Lisa Macpherson,* a Vision Itinerant with the Jefferson County Public Schools. In addition, the children of several VIPS staff and their friends helped out, including: *Mary Catherine Atkins, Jessica Bartley, Sarah Kriete, Jeannie and Jill Logsdon, Scott Moore, Amy Ramsey, Adriene and Ashley Reynolds, Jennifer Stelly, and Jamie Weedman.*

For working the VIPS booth at the Highland Post Picnic, July 25 & 26 thanks to *Melinda & Mary Catherine Atkins, Rita Badger, Joan & Norman Balot, Alisa Beatty, Rita Gast, Judy & Mike Goldring, Charlie Johnson, Sharon & Robin Bensinger, Kelly Carter, Donna Davis, Tammy Elwanger, Robin & Troy Frazier, Amanda Leister, Lisa & Tommy Leister, Shelly & Trevor Johnson, Jan Moseley, Kelly Nash, Earl Preher, Ed Prescott, Ellen & Bruce Prizant, David & Kristie Saffer, Karen Dean Spanbauer, Joy & Jennifer Stelly, Bernie Tichenor, and Mary Ann & Tom Van Etten.*

For painting the delightful murals on the walls of the VIPS-Louisville multipurpose area, thanks to Art Instructor *Carol Cassady of the Brown School, and her students Sean Alvey and Wes Esarey.*

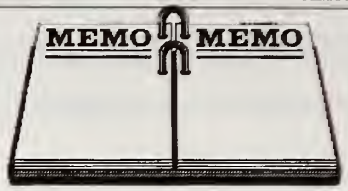
For office assistance for VIPS-Louisville, thanks to *Laverne Bolander and Karen Dean Spanbauer.*

For helping out with the Friday morning VIPS-Louisville PEP class, thanks to *Marcia Reynolds.*

For providing music instruction to children in the Friday PEP class, thanks to *Dorothy Nolen,* music teacher at the Kentucky School for the Blind.

For providing respite care during the VIPS-Central Kentucky PIN meeting on Sept. 11, thanks to *Lindsey Powell* of Delta Gamma.

Notes of Interest



A Directory of support groups for agenesis of the corpus collosum and related conditions is available at the VIPS Office. VIPS Interventionist Julie Broyles is a member of this network. Contact Julie at the VIPS-Louisville Office for more information.

The popular "Goosebumps" series of books by R.L. Stine is now being made available in braille, free of charge, to blind children through the American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults. If you know a braille reader who would like to receive these books, contact: American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults, 1800 Johnson Street, Baltimore, MD 21230.

The "Guide to Resources for Children and Youth with Visual Impairments," compiled and edited by Denise M. Ferrin, is now available in an updated and expanded edition. It is available for $19, plus $3 shipping and handling from: Cane and Compass Publishing, P.O. Box 11, Westminster, CA 92684-0011.

The National Organization for Rare Diseases (NORD) can be accessed through the Internet — address: http://199.249.196.59/NORD/.

Tactile Symbols have been designed for persons needing a graphic language system, or who are blind or have a dual-sensory impairment. Symbols depict the word they represent (such as a spoon for eating) as well as more abstract concepts (a heart for emotions). For more information contact: Blind Children's Fund Resource Center, 2971 53rd Street, Auburn, WA 98092-8310.

"Games with a Purpose" is a book of games to develop orientation and mobility skills, preschool through high school. It is available free from: Richard C. Drouillard, Oakland Schools, 2100 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford, MI 48328-2735.

Efforts are still underway to compile the Anophthalmia/Microophthalmia Registry. Contact: Dr. Adele Schneider, Albert Einstein Medical Center, Levy 2 West, 5501 Old York Road, Philadelphia, PA 19141, (215) 456-8722, e-mail: aemcgenetics@icdc.com.

Dot-to-Dot: Part IV

The Braille Alphabet

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j
⠁	⠃	⠉	⠙	⠑	⠋	⠛	⠓	⠊	⠚
k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t
⠅	⠇	⠍	⠝	⠕	⠏	⠟	⠗	⠎	⠞
u	v	x	y	z		w			
⠥	⠧	⠭	⠽	⠵		⠺			

Common Punctuation Signs in Braille

Punctuation marks are used in braille just as in print. Here are some of the most common punctuation marks:

apostrophe	⠄
colon	⠒
comma	⠂
exclamation point	⠖
hyphen	⠤
period	⠲
question mark	⠦

Still More About Contractions

As you may recall from Dot-To-Dot, Pt. 3, there are 189 contractions in braille. In this section, you will learn about another group of braille contractions, two-letter, part-word contractions. This group of contractions represents combinations of letters that commonly appear together in words.

Each of these two-letter contractions can only be used as part of a word.

ar	er	ed	gh	ow
⠜	⠻	⠫	⠣	⠪

For example, as in the words:

car = ⠉⠜

berry = ⠃⠻⠗⠽

need = ⠝⠑⠫

high = ⠓⠊⠣

cow = ⠉⠪

The following two-letter contractions can also represent words when they stand alone in a sentence.

ch/child	⠡	church =	⠡⠉⠗⠓
sh/shall	⠩	fish =	⠋⠊⠩
th/this	⠹	bath =	⠃⠁⠹
wh/which	⠱	white =	⠺⠓⠊⠞⠑
ou/out	⠳	pour =	⠏⠕⠳
st/still	⠌	step =	⠎⠞⠑⠏

Braille Brain Teaser

⠠⠝⠕⠺ ⠊⠋ ⠺⠑ ⠁⠗⠑ ⠕⠥⠞ ⠙⠕⠗⠎⠂ ⠉⠁⠝ ⠞⠓⠊⠎ ⠉⠓⠊⠇⠙ ⠎⠞⠊⠇⠇ ⠊⠝ ⠁ ⠓⠊⠣⠓⠉⠓⠁⠊⠗⠦

Answer: Now if we are out doors, can this child sit still in a highchair? (Remember, the letter *c* standing alone is the word *can*.)

Upcoming Events

Thursdays

PAL class will be held at the VIPS-Louisville Office for children birth through two years of age.

Fridays

PEP class for preschoolers will be held at the VIPS-Louisville Office. The last Friday of the month will feature a parent participation activity.

Saturday, October 25

The Annual VIPS-Louisville Halloween Party will be held at Chuck E. Cheese, in the Indian Trail Center, 10 a.m. This is a fun time for the whole family!! Kids will have ample opportunity to enjoy the rides and games. Tokens, lunch of pizza, cokes and dessert will be included. Cost will be $4 per adult and $2 per child in the immediate family, up to a maximum cost of $12 per family. Please call the VIPS Office to let us know how many in your family to expect. Don't forget to come in costume!!!

Monday, October 27**

"How to Pull Together, Not Apart," a special presentation by Dr. Liz Fitzgerald, will be held at the VIPS-Louisville Office, 6:30 p.m. You don't want to miss this opportunity to learn how to nurture your marriage while coping with the stresses of raising a child with a disability. Dr. Fitzgerald has many years experience working with children with disabilities, their families, and the health and educational professionals who work with them. A pizza supper will be provided and limited childcare offered. Call the VIPS Office to let us know how many in your family to expect!

Tuesday, October 28

A Halloween Party will be held for VIPS-Central Kentucky families, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Location to be announced.

Tuesday, November 18

A "Make-It & Take-It Workshop" will be sponsored by VIPS-Central Kentucky, 6:30 p.m. at Hunter Presbyterian Church, 109 Rosemont Garden, Lexington.

Thursday, November 20**

A panel of siblings of persons with disabilities will discuss their experiences and feelings growing up in a special family, at the VIPS-Louisville Office, 6:30 p.m. The panel will include teen and adult siblings of persons with disabilities ranging in age from nine to 49 years old. Expect a wide range of perspectives and experiences, from dealing with family and peer reactions, to making life choices, to adult placement in supported living situations! A light dinner will be provided and limited childcare offered. Call the VIPS Office to let us know how many in your family to expect!

Sunday, November 23 - Wednesday, November 26

The Annual Kentucky Dept. of Education Conference on Programs for Exceptional Children will be held at the Galt House East in Louisville. Call (502) 564-4970 for registration information.

Sunday, December 7

VIPS-Louisville will hold the Annual Christmas Party and Open House, 2-4 p.m. in the Lobby of The Courier-Journal Building, 525 West Broadway. You don't want to miss this festive and fun-filled event! Storyteller Cynthia Changaris will entertain children and parents alike with her wonderful blend of stories and songs. And, of course, there will be a visit from Santa Claus, who will distribute goodies to all children attending!! Be sure to call the VIPS Office to let us know how many in your family to expect.

Saturday, December 13

VIPS-Central Kentucky will hold the Annual Santa Party, 1-5 p.m. at Hunter Presbyterian Church, 109 Rosemont Garden, Lexington.

**** These events are being held instead of evening PAL class.**

Visually Impaired Preschool Services
1229 Garvin Place
Louisville, KY 40203

Address Correction Requested

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 284
Louisville, KY

VIPS

Metro United Way

Susan Spungin, Ed.D.
Assoc. Dir. Program Serv.
11 Penn Plaza Suite 300
New York NY 10001

Elgu.

VISUALLY
IMPAIRED
PRESCHOOL
SERVICES

1229 GARVIN PL.
LOUISVILLE,
KY 40203
502.636.3207

Vol. 14, No. 2 **Parents Newsletter** **Mar./Apr. 1998**

TOP 10 REASONS You Should Get Involved in VIPS Parent Activities

1. You are your child's first and best teacher.
2. With a disability, comes the need to learn many new things you never needed to know before.
3. The more you know, the more powerful you can be in advocating for your child's needs.
4. You'll have fun while you're learning.
5. No one can understand your hopes and dreams, fears and frustrations better than other parents who are facing, or have faced, similar challenges.
6. You get free materials and neat handouts for future reference.
7. You can pick the brains of guest speakers in an informal setting.
8. Childcare and meals are provided *as often as possible* to make it easier for you to attend.
9. You get to take your whole family to neat places, almost always *FREE* of charge.
10. What have you got to lose? What do you need to gain?

On Friday Feb. 27, VIPS-Louisville held an Introduction to Braille Workshop for parents while their children were attending the Preschool Enrichment Program (PEP). Those attending wanted to know enough about braille to study and practice at home in preparation for their children becoming braille readers. Some felt that braille was almost too mysterious to learn. But by the end of the workshop, they had discovered that braille is actually a very logical system of reading and writing! Participants got to practice reading and writ-

In This Issue:

Bill of Rights for Parents 3
Legal Assistance Available 3
VIPS Offices/Staff 3
Creative Storytelling Project 3
News from VIPS-Central Kentucky 4
VIPS Staff News 5
In Memoriam 5
Announcing Sibshop (Just for siblings)!! 6
My Little Friend Dustin 6
Welcome New Kids 7
Thanks To Our Donors 7
Thanks to Our Volunteers 7
Dot-To-Dot, Part V 8
Seeing 9
Notes of Interest 10
VIPS Presents CVI Workshop 11

Mary Cochrum writes braille with the slate and stylus.

ing Grade 1 Braille and to use both the slate and stylus and the Perkins brailler. They had so much fun that they decided to do more Friday morning educational activities during the Preschool Enrichment Program. All VIPS parents are welcome to become involved. Call Pauletta at the VIPS-Louisville Office, (502) 636-3207, for more information.

Kathy Kuhn writes on the Perkins Brailler.

Barbara Bunuan (left) and Jane Shafer (right) conducted the workshop on "Understanding Special Education."

On Wednesday, March 4, a group of VIPS parents participated in a day-long "Understanding Special Education (USE) Workshop," offered at the VIPS-Louisville Office by Barbara Bunuan and Jane Shafer of the Kentucky School for the Blind Instructional Resource Center. Parents received a wealth of information and great handouts that will enable them to understand and advocate for their child's educational rights under the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)," a federal law guaranteeing a free and appropriate education for all children with disabilities. The informal workshop offered plenty of opportunity for participants to ask questions and discuss particular concerns. The mix of participants was especially beneficial, ranging from parents of infants to parents whose children are older. One of the handouts given during the workshop is reprinted to the right.

A Bill of Rights for Parents

by Sol Gordon, Ph.D., Director
Institute for Family Research

Parents are acutely aware of their responsibilities to provide educational, medical, emotional, and professional help for their offspring, but are seldom aware of the rights they also have as parents of a child who has a disability and as just plain people.

Parents have the right to:

- Love and enjoy your child.
- Feel that you have done the best you can.
- Be depressed or have hostile thoughts once in a while without feeling guilty.
- Be guilty occasionally, but only if it organizes you.
- To not always feel you have to be patient.
- Enjoy life as intensely as possible, even though you have a child who is disabled.
- Have interesting causes to support and to be busier than the average person, to a point where people say, "How does he (or she) do it?" (If you want something done, ask a busy person.)
- Let your child with a disability have his or her own private life.
- Enjoy being alone at times.
- Get away for at least a two-week vacation every year without the children.
- Have dates, anniversaries, celebrations, weekends away, time together designed to enhance your marriage or "singlehood" -- in other words, freedom for escapist moments.
- Have a sense of humor without feeling guilty.
- Acknowledge you are spending lots of time with your child without having it mean you love the rest of the family less.
- Not devote your entire life to the "cause," but freedom to devote as mush as you want or to get away from it for awhile.
- Say at times that you don't want to talk about your problems.
- Let people know at other times about the progress and achievements with a genuine sense of pride.
- Lie every once in a while, to say everything is fine, not feeling compelled to tell the truth to everyone

who asks, "How are you?"

- Tell teachers and other professionals how you really feel about the job they are doing, and to demand they respect your opinions.
- Tell your child that you don't like certain things he or she does regardless of the presence of a disability.
- Not praise your child gratuitously, even though you've been told to offer a lot of praise.
- Spend a little extra money on yourself, whether or not you can afford it.
- Have your hobbies and interests without interference, whether Mahjong, Mahler, or macramé.

Parents who do not enjoy almost all these freedoms are in trouble. Persons who have a disability can only feel guilty if they sense that their parents have sacrificed themselves for them. Martyred parents are seldom appreciated by anybody, least of all their child with a disability. These freedoms must be embarked upon, especially by parents whose child has been dependent, clinging, demanding, and difficult.

Legal Assistance Available

Do you have a child with a disability whose SSI benefits have been discontinued? Volunteer attorneys are now available to assist children whose SSI benefits have been affected by changes in welfare laws.

Many local families may have received notice about the discontinuation of SSI, particularly in cases where a child's disability is based on behavioral disorders or serious emotional problems.

For further information or to obtain the assistance of a volunteer attorney, contact the Legal Aid Society in Louisville at 584-1254, Mondays, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., and Tuesdays through Firdays, 9 a.m. - noon.

If you live outside of Louisville, contact your local Legal Aid Society or bar association to find out if volunteer attorneys are available in your area.

The *VIPS Parents Newsletter* is a bimonthly publication of Visually Impaired Preschool Services, Inc. Please direct comments or suggestions to Pauletta Feldman, Newsletter Editor. *Subscription cost is $15 per year outside of Kentucky.*

Visually Impaired Preschool Services, Inc.
Sharon Bensinger, Executive Director
VIPS-Louisville
1229 Garvin Place
Louisville, KY 40203
(502) 636-3207 Toll free 1-888-636-8477
Melinda Atkins, Education Coordinator
Beverly Ballard, Office Assistant
Alisa Beatty, Office Manager
Julie Broyles, Early Interventionist
Pauletta Feldman, Family Services Coordinator
Robin Frazier, Public Relations
Judy Goldring, Early Interventionist
Lisa Leister, Comptroller
Mary Ann Reynolds, Early Interventionist
Suze Staugas, Outreach Consultant
Joy Stelly, Classroom Assistant

VIPS-Central Kentucky
343 Waller Avenue, Suite 303
Lexington, KY 40504
(606) 254-5519 Toll free 1-888-254-8477
Monica Busha, Early Interventionist
Karen Johnston, Early Interventionist
Mary Jane Jones, Family Services Coordinator
Tami Stinnett, Secretary

The Creative Storytelling Project

VIPS is pleased to be participating in a new project sponsored by Metro United Way for participating agencies. "The Creative Storytelling Project" is pairing agencies with local creative writers and artists to come up with moving and unique ways of telling the stories of individuals who receive services through MUW agencies. Finished works may take the form of poems, stories, or even drama.

All participating artists and writers are donating their time. VIPS is one of only two agencies that has been assigned both a writer, *Mr. Terry Holland*, and a multidimensional artist, *Mary Dennis Kannappel*! It will be exciting to see the outcome of their individual and/or collaborative efforts!!

VIPS-Central Kentucky News

Annual Santa Party

VIPS-Central Kentucky held its Annual Santa Party on Dec. 13, 1997. The party was held at Hunter Presbyterian Church from 1- 5 p.m. We had a total of 21 children attend and enjoy the festivities.

Santa listened intently to Alexis Johnson's wishes.

Santa came in ringing his bells right after the children arrived. Each child was able to sit on Santa's lap and get his or her picture taken. Each also received a stocking full of goodies from Santa's elves. After the children and Santa had their time together, the parents were able to leave for a few hours of shopping time, while VIPS volunteers and staff provided respite care for their children. Children played games and made several crafts, such as a reindeer bell ornament, magnets, and teddy bear ornaments. They also made a gift bag for their parents. In addition, they gobbled goodies and watched Christmas videos. The day was enjoyed by parents and children alike.

"Who is this guy?" thought Derrick Reese

We would like to thank everyone that made the Santa Party possible, including *our Santa Melvin Weber,* and *respite helpers, Becky Cline of Shriner's Hospital, Julie Moser formerly of the VIPS-CK Advisory Committee, Sharon Miller and Donna Miller of Delta Gamma, and the family of Tami Stinnet, Secretary for VIPS-CK.*

Above: Shawn Jameson warmed up to Santa. Below: Mikayla and Nicholas Piper visited Santa on the buddy-system.

VIPS Bowling Day

VIPS-Central Kentucky held a bowling party on Feb. 21, 1998 at Collin's Southland Bowling Lanes. A total of 12 adults and 9 children attended. A highlight of the day was a "bowl off," with the winner receiving a ticket to admit two to a Thoroughbred's hockey game. Congratulations to Burt Paden who won. VIPS would like to thank *Jim Beward of Collin's Bowling Lanes* for helping set up the Bowling Day and for giving VIPS a discount to bowl. A great thanks goes out to our respite workers, *Sharon Miller and members of the Delta Gamma Sorority.*

VIPS Staff News

Meet Mary Jane

VIPS-Central Kentucky bids a fond farewell to Adrienne Clark, who has resigned as Family Services Coordinator due to health reasons. Adrienne plans to stay involved with the VIPS program as much as possible on a volunteer basis.

We are pleased to announce that Mary Jane Jones has become our new Family Services Coordinator. Mary Jane and her husband Darrell live in Georgetown, KY. They have two daughters. Lacey is eight and Hannah is four. Hannah is a graduate of VIPS and with the wonderful help of her interventionists and some blessings from up above, she has progressed to no longer needing any extra visual instruction.

"VIPS is very dear to us," says Mary Jane. "They were the first contact we had in this new world we entered when Hannah was born with a disability. They realize that no child is an island, but part of a family, and VIPS treats that family as a whole. VIPS never focused only on Hannah's vision, but offered much help with her other disabilities."

"I feel very fortunate to join the VIPS staff," Mary Jane continues. "It feels rather natural to take this new step in my adventure as Hannah's mother. Thank you for making me feel so welcome!"

The Jones Family at Disney World this past summer.

Welcome Joy

VIPS mom Joy Stelly has joined the VIPS-Louisville staff on a part-time basis. Joy is working two days a week, assisting with Thursday's Play and Learn (PAL) classes and with Friday's Preschool Enrichment Program (PEP).

Joy has long been willing to lend her volunteer support to any VIPS endeavor. She is a lady of many talents, the greatest of which is a willingness to do anything to help and her infectious laugh and easy sense of humor.

Joy and her husband Karl live in Louisville and have three children: Jennifer who is in seventh grade; Jeffrey who is in first grade; and Christopher who is four and attends Churchill Park preschool. Christopher has been involved with VIPS for most of his young life.

IN MEMORIAM

This issue of the VIPS Parents Newsletter is dedicated to the memories of

Kamrun Knight
daughter of Stacey Kimbro of Bowling Green, who passed away at the age of 15 months on December 9, 1997

Danielle Traylor
daughter of Delsey and Brian Traylor of Georgetown, who passed away at the age of 18 months on January 27, 1998.

Wesley Ridener
son of Mr. & Mrs. Bobb Ridener of Louisville, who passed away at the age of two years on February 12, 1998

Randy Fink
son of Jane and Leslie Fink of Shelbyville, who passed away at the age of 19 months on March 2, 1998

Our hearts go out to their families.

!! Announcing !! SIBSHOP

VIPS-Louisville is beginning Sibshop groups for brothers and sisters, ages 4-13, of VIPS children. *The first session is scheduled for Sunday, April 26, 2 - 4:30 p.m.* Subsequent sessions will be held every other month. There will be a $2 per child fee for each Sibshop session to cover the costs of refreshments, materials, and activities.

VIPS Interventionist Judy Goldring will be coordinating the Sibshop program. Two groups will be formed: one for siblings who are between the ages of four and eight years, and one for siblings between the ages of nine and 13 years. Each group will be limited to 15 participants. Persons who are experienced with the needs of the disabled and their families will be group facilitators along with VIPS staff.

This program is a special time for siblings only (not for VIPS children or their parents)!!

The Sibshop model gives siblings of children with disabilities opportunities for peer support and education through activities designed to accomplish the following goals:

- To provide siblings with the opportunity to meet other siblings in a relaxed, recreational setting;
- To provide siblings with the opportunity to discuss common joys and concerns with other siblings;
- To provide siblings with the opportunity to learn how others handle situations commonly experienced by siblings of children with disabilities; and
- To provide siblings with the opportunity to learn more about the implications of their siblings' special needs.

Call Judy Goldring at (502) 636-3207 to make plans for your child to attend!

My Little Friend Dustin

by Cristi Karrer
5th Grade Student, St. Stephen Martyr

My friend, Dustin, was born on August 27, 1996 in Louisville, KY. At that time I did not even know him. His birth parents were very young. They decided they could not give Dustin the care that he needed. Two days later was the first day that I met Dustin and it was the first day that he was brought home with my friends, Jim and Rita.

This was the most exciting day anyone could imagine. My friends, Jim and Rita, were in total shock and very ecstatic. They had been trying to adopt for five years, so it was like a dream come true. Rita had come by my house around 2:00 p.m. and said that she needed an outfit for a newborn. My mom said for a boy or a girl, and she said a boy. My mom said are you watching a newborn, and Rita said, "No, I'm going to the hospital to pick up a baby boy." The next five hours we were so anxious and excited. It's hard to say how we really felt. It's hard to imagine how Jim and Rita were feeling.

They finally returned home with a bouncing baby boy. They named him Dustin Andrew. The next couple of months were just like any other newborn. Sleeps a lot, eats, getting up two to three times during the night, and the excitement of a tiny little newborn baby. Jim and Rita's life had just changed dramatically.

Dustin does not have a life like other babies. At the age of seven months, Jim and Rita were told that Dustin had cerebral palsy. The doctor told them the worst that it could be. He said, "He may never walk, he may never sit up, he may never feed himself, and he could be mentally retarded."

You could only imagine how Rita and Jim felt. Rita's worst fear was that he would never walk or talk. Jim's worst fear was that he would be mentally retarded. Although their fears have not been completely answered Dustin is improving in every way.

The doctor told them that he could not tell how bad his disability could be. Dustin was also born without a septum, which is a tissue in your brain that controls the movement of his eyes. It controls the following of objects. They were also told that some children this does not bother at all.

Dustin is 17 months old now. He goes to therapy almost every day of the week. He goes to an occupational therapist. She is the one who will teach him how to feed himself, put on his shoes and get himself dressed. She works a lot with his motor skills.

His speech therapist is teaching him how to talk. He has a computer that he touches the screen which makes sounds when he does this. This is called cause and effect. The other day he said "Mom" for the first time.

He goes to physical therapy. They try to get him in good sitting position and are getting him to reach out for objects. They also try to loosen up his muscles by rubbing them. He wears small gloves on his hands to keep his thumbs out and he wears splints on his ankles to help him stand. They also put him on a big ball to strengthen his trunk.

He goes to eye therapy to help him follow objects. All of the therapists think that he is very smart because he gets bored with doing the same thing over and over.

Right now, Dustin is rolling over, he is reaching for a lot of his toys, he is starting to say words, and he is trying his hardest to crawl. With all the therapy we all pray that he progresses. The therapists say that one of the best forms of therapy is that he is around other kids. Rita does not work outside her home, but her two nephews are there every day and Dustin just loves being with them.

You know, they say that God works in mysterious ways. I feel this is very true. Dustin is the greatest gift of joy that was brought to my friends, Jim and Rita. Jim and Rita are the greatest gift that Dustin could ever have hoped for. Dustin is very fortunate to have Jim and Rita as parents because of all the love and therapy that is going to be required throughout his life. Jim and Rita have not officially adopted Dustin at this present time, but we are hoping within the next six months we will have a reason to celebrate this final adoption.

VIPS is pleased to welcome the following new children and their families into the VIPS-Louisville Program:
Lauren — 14 months old
(Louisville, KY)
Logan — 17 months old
(Elizabethtown, KY)

Thanks To Our Donors...

Thanks to the following individuals and organizations who have so generously made donations to VIPS over the past two months. These donations were received between Jan. 20 - March 10, 1998. Please call the VIPS Office with any omissions or corrections.

Dr. & Mrs. Jerry Berman
Central Printing Company (Donation of printing)
Ms. Judy Chapman
Ms. Linda L. Cohen
Cook Memorial United Methodist Church
Mrs. Maud Fliegelman
Ms. Henrietta Harrison
Ms. Jennifer Lonergan
Mr. & Mrs. Douglas McKellar, Sr.
Ms. Carolyn J. Neustadt
Mrs. Ruth Ohler
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Prescott
Mrs. Ellen Prizant
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Roberts
Mr. Lester Sanders
St. Matthews Elementary PTA (Family Retreat)
Dr. Lisa Verderber

Thanks to *Mrs. Joy Stelly* for the donation of an easel for use by PAL and PEP children. Thanks to *Mr. & Mrs. Michael McGrath, Jr. and family* for donating funds to purchase a light table. This piece of equipment is a real hit with the children!!

...And To Our Volunteers!

For help with the VIPS-Central Kentucky Santa Party on December 13, thanks to our Santa *Melvin Weber*, and respite helpers, *Becky Cline* of Shriner's Hospital, *Julie Moser* formerly of the VIPS-CK Advisory Committee, *Sharon Miller and Donna Miller* of Delta Gamma, and the *family of Tami Stinnet*, Secretary for VIPS-CK.

For providing respite care during the VIPS-Central Kentucky Bowling Party on February 21, thanks to *Sharon Miller and members of Delta Gamma Sorority.*

For teaching music and movement during the VIPS-Louisville PEP class, thanks to *Dorothy Nolen.*

For helping out at the VIPS-Louisville office each Tuesday, thanks to *Tami Penner.*

Dot-To-Dot, Pt. V

Let's recap what you've learned so far:

The Braille Alphabet

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j
⠁	⠃	⠉	⠙	⠑	⠋	⠛	⠓	⠊	⠚
k	**l**	**m**	**n**	**o**	**p**	**q**	**r**	**s**	**t**
⠅	⠇	⠍	⠝	⠕	⠏	⠟	⠗	⠎	⠞
u	**v**	**x**	**y**	**z**		**w**			
⠥	⠧	⠭	⠽	⠵		⠺			

Contractions

Alphabet Words — Single Letter Contractions
(Each letter of the alphabet represents a word when standing alone in a sentence.)

a	a	n	not
b	but	o	o
c	can	p	people
d	do	q	quite
e	every	r	rather
f	from	s	so
g	go	t	that
h	have	u	us
i	I	v	very
j	just	w	will
k	knowledge	x	it
l	like	y	you
m	more	z	as

Whole & Part Word Contractions
(These contractions can be used as whole words or as parts of other words. They do not need to be separated by a space when used together.)

and	for	of	the	with
⠯	⠿	⠷	⠮	⠾

Two-Letter, Part-Word Contractions
(These must be used as part of a word.)

ar	er	ed	gh	ow
⠜	⠻	⠫	⠣	⠪

(The following two-letter contractions can also represent words when they stand alone in a sentence.)

ch *or* child	⠡
sh *or* shall	⠩
th *or* this	⠹
wh *or* which	⠱
ou *or* out	⠳
st *or* still	⠌

In Dot-To-Dot, Pt. V, you will learn about a new group of contractions, initial letter contractions. These are formed by placing a dot 5, dots 4,5 or dots 4,5,6 in the cell before the letter with which a word begins. Initial letter contractions can be used as whole words or parts of other words.

Initial Letter Contractions
(These can be used as whole words or parts of other words)

dot 5 +	d	=	day	⠙
	e	=	ever	⠑
	f	=	father	⠋
	h	=	here	⠓
	k	=	know	⠅
	l	=	lord	⠇
	m	=	mother	⠍
	n	=	name	⠝

o = one

p = part

q = question

r = right

s = some

t = time

u = under

w = work

y = young

ch = character

ou = ought

th = through

the = there

wh = where

dots 4, 5 +

u = upon

w = word

th = those

the = these

wh = whose

dots 4, 5, 6 +

c = cannot

h = had

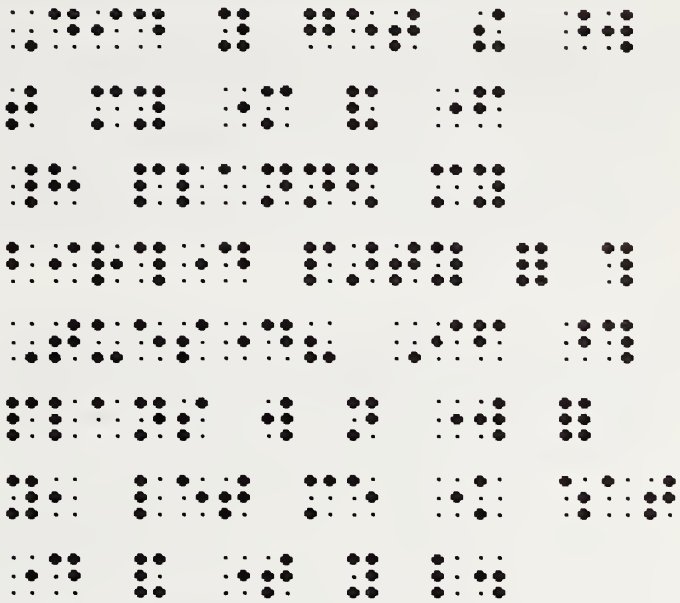
m = many

s = spirit

w = world

the = their

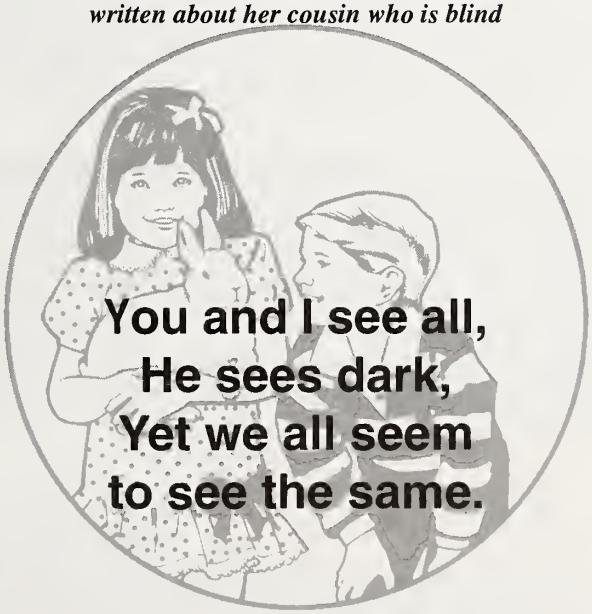
Braille Brain Teaser

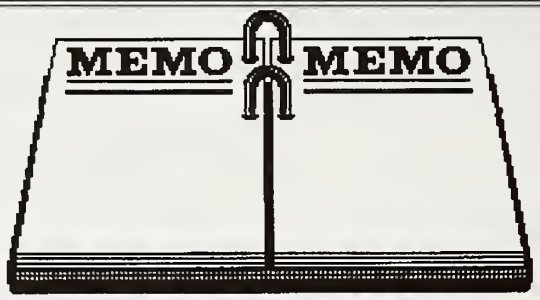


Answer on page 10.

Seeing

by Emily Wall
8th grade, Thomas Jefferson MS
written about her cousin who is blind





Notes of Interest

A great website for families of children with disabilities called Family Village provides links to all sorts of informative sites on specific conditions. In addition, parents can link to chat rooms and many other information sources. The address is: http://www.familyvillage.wisc.edu/

"Families in Partnership: Basic Rights for Families of Children with Blindness or Visual Impairment" is a great guidebook for understanding your child's educational needs and the special education process. It is available for $15 from: National Association of Parents of the Visually Impaired (NAPVI), 1-800-562-6265. (This is also the text for a new course offered by the Hadley School for the Blind and is free for students enrolled in the course. Call 1-800-323-4238 to register.)

"Childhood Glaucoma: A Reference Guide for Families" deals with treatment, educational issues, family impacts, and resources for childhood glaucoma. It is available free from: Glaucoma Research Foundation, 490 Post Street, Suite 830, San Francisco, CA 94102, or from NAPVI, 1-800-562-6265.

Two new books on siblings of children with disabilities have recently been published. *"Views from Our Shoes: Growing Up with a Brother or Sister with Special Needs"* and *"My Brother, Matthew"* are both told from a child's perspective. Each costs $14.95 and is available from Woodbine House, 6510 Bells Mill Road, Bethesda, MD 20817, 1-800-843-7323.

A number of children's books dealing with blindness and visual impairment are available from the Blind Children's Fund, 2875 Northwind Drive, Suite 211, East Lansing, MI 48823-0540, (517) 333-1725:

"Knots on a Counting Rope," about a young native American boy's growth of self-confidence despite his blindness. ($15)

"Through Grandpa's Eyes," the story of a young boy and his grandfather who is blind. ($5)

"Jonathan's Journey," about a young boy with severe disabilities who learns that he is really no different from other children when he is taken on a journey through time and space by Jesus. ($11)

"Crystal Moonlight," about a young girl who is blind and learns to see with her heart. ($8)

"Mom Can't See Me," the true-life story of a young girl whose mother is blind. ($15)

"Lucy's Picture," about a young girl who wants to make a picture for her grandfather who is blind. ($15)

"Naomi Knows It's Springtime," tells how Naomi who is blind recognizes spring by its sounds and smells. ($15)

"Listen for the Bus: David's Story," about a new kindergartner who is deaf-blind. ($16)

"I Can Tell By Touching," a rhythmic text about textures. ($5)

"Jeremy's Dreidel," about a young boy who makes a dreidel for Hanukkah and decorates it with braille. ($6)

Answer: *Did you get the word that my mother and father had planned my birthday party for this Tuesday? If those plans will not work for you, let me know what day and time you like.*

VIPS PRESENTS
Workshop on Cortical Visual Impairment

On May 6, VIPS will hold a special workshop on cortical visual impairment with Anne Ruthnaswami Broughton, EdD, in the Community Room of the Metro United Way Building, 334 East Broadway, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Cost for the workshop will be $10. Participants are welcome to order a box lunch for $7, or can brown-bag it with a lunch from home.

Anne has a variety of experience in working with children with visual impairments and multiple disabilities. She has specialized in cortical visual impairment. Currently, she is Director of the Early Intervention Program and Parent Infant Nurturing Group at University Affiliated Cincinnati Center for Developmental Disorders. In addition, she serves as a consultant for the Great Lakes Area Resource Center for Deaf/Blind Education. Previously, Ann worked for the Cincinnati Association for the Blind where she began their early intervention program in 1988. She received both her Masters Degree and Doctorate in Special Education from the University of Cincinnati.

Workshop Agenda

9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	--	Welcome & introductions
9:30 - 10:45 a.m.	--	Cortical visual impairment (CVI), characteristics of the child with CVI, diagnostic tests, stages of recovery, and appropriate program recommendations.
10:45 - 11:30 a.m.	--	Break
11:00 - noon	--	Lunch
Noon - 1:00 p.m.	--	The sense and physiology of vision
1:00 - 2:00 p.m.	--	Profiles of children with CVI
2:00 - 3:00 p.m.	--	Demonstration of functional vision screening with an infant or child with CVI.

Registration is limited to the first 50 persons who respond. Mail check to:

CVI Workshop
Visually Impaired Preschool Services
1229 Garvin Place
Louisville, KY 40203

CVI Workshop Registration

Name_____

Address_____

_____Phone_____

I will ____ will not _____ need a box lunch.

Enclosed is my check for: Registration ($10.00) _____

Lunch ($7.00) _____ (Roasted chicken sandwich____ or Vegetarian club____)

Total enclosed $ _____

Upcoming Events

Thursdays

Play and Learn (PAL) Class will be held at the VIPS-Louisville Office for infants and toddlers, 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Fridays

Preschool Enrichment Program will be held at the VIPS-Louisville Office, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 26

A Sibshop will be held at the VIPS-Louisville Office, 2-4:30 p.m. This is a special program for siblings of VIPS children who are between the ages of four and 13 years. There will be a $2 fee for each child. Call Judy Goldring to register your child(ren). *(See details, page 6.)*

Wednesday, May 6

VIPS will host a special workshop on cortical visual impairment, presented by Dr. Anne Ruthnaswami Broughton, Metro United Way Building, 334 East Broadway, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Cost is $10. *(See registration form, page 11.)*

Thursday, May 7

VIPS-Louisville will hold a "Mother's Day Brunch" for VIPS moms at the VIPS Office, 10:30 a.m. While this event will be held during PAL class, all VIPS Moms are welcome to attend. Call the VIPS Office, 636-3207, to let us know you are coming!!

Saturday, May 9

VIPS-Louisville will hold a Yard Day to clean up and fix up our yard and playground equipment, 9 a.m. - noon. Volunteers are welcome!! Call the VIPS Office, 636-3207, if you can help out.

Wednesday, May 13

We hope that some VIPS preschoolers will be able to participate in Junior Olympics, sponsored by the Kentucky School for the Blind. This is a great experience, filled with fun and the opportunity to participate in track and field events.

Friday, May 22

A "Volunteer and Donor Appreciation Day" will be held at the VIPS-Louisville Office, 10 a.m. - noon.

Planning Ahead

Saturday and Sunday, July 11 & 12

The Tenth Annual VIPS Family Retreat Weekend will be held at Otter Creek Park. Registrations will be mailed in mid-May.

Monday through Thursday, July 20 - 30 (tentative)

VIPS-Louisville will hold Summer Enrichment for children entering or enrolled in preschool.

*The VIPS Monopoly Tournament, which had been scheduled for Mar. 21, had to be postponed due to insufficient corporate sponsorship needed to make the event possible.

Visually Impaired Preschool Services
1229 Garvin Place
Louisville, KY 40203

Address Correction Requested

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 284
Louisville, KY

VIPS

Metro United Way

AUTO********MIXED ADC 400
SUSAN SPUNGIN, ED.D.
ASSOC. DIR. PROGRAM SERV.
11 PENN PLZ RM 300
NEW YORK NY 10001-2006

1/18/2013
T 2820695 4 00
HF GROUP - IN